

BURMA, AFTER THE CONQUEST,

VIEWED IN ITS POLITICAL, SOCIAL, AND COMMERCIAL
ASPECTS,

MANDALAY.

BY

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PREFACE.

HAVING written this brief volume on "Burma After the Conquest," the idea occurs to me that the chief excuse for the book, is to be found in the circumstance that it fulfils, by accident, or fate, though not of set purpose, the office which the Provost Marshal's camera accomplished in placing on record the effect of the bullets on the dacoits executed at Mandalay. It brings into a focus the hopes and fears, the actions and the passions, in play during the interregnum in Burma, between the deposition of King Theebaw and the advent of Lord Dufferin, to pronounce the decree fixing the future of the country.

The consternation of the Burmese, stunned and terror-stricken ; the activity and resolution of the British officials, masters of the present, and looking forward with confidence to the future ; the British soldier, discontented at having triumphed too easily, without any fighting worthy

of his thews and sinews; the Buddhist hierophant dreaming of spiritual peace, and unheeding the splashes of blood on the cactus beside him; Theebaw's crown—a fool's cap steeped in blood—lying in the mud, no one caring to pick it up; Burmese princesses pensioned off by the victor, and going into exile to find there security for their lives, which were in hourly peril in their Capital; the Anglo-Burman praying for annexation, as the greatest boon Heaven could give to the two Burmas; the Chinaman preferring his claims to Bhamo, with its jewel mines, and its india-rubber trees; the French diplomatist, disconcerted and soured by an unlooked-for humiliation—the fruit of his own miscalculations: all these deserved to be photographed as they appeared during an important instant of time, which can never be recalled. The camera may not have worked without blurs; but the object of the photographer was to get an exact record of things as they were. No attempt has been made to alter their aspect, or to shade or brighten the picture in accordance with any preconceived view.

As I have just mentioned the Burmese princesses, and their pensions, I may add here that the scale mentioned in the text has been revised

and moderately enhanced. On the arrival of these interesting exiles at Rangoon, Mr. Symes, who carried on the administration of Lower Burma with conspicuous energy in a time of considerable anxiety, during the absence of Mr. Bernard, provided a house for them, and took measures for their protection and comfort.

When I went to Burma I had not made up my mind on the burning question of annexation. It seemed to me to be a matter which could not be decided upon abstract principles. When in Burma, the considerations which presented themselves seemed to justify Lord Salisbury's opinion, that in dealing with the future of Burma the minimum of innovation would promise the best results. The necessity of putting an end to the foreign entanglements in which King Theebaw's intrigues had threatened to involve Burma, compelled the British Government to incorporate Burma in the dominions of Her Majesty. There has been a general agreement that this step was legitimate and advisable. With respect to the form which should be given to the administration of the country thus brought within the system of the Empire, there was some reason for hesitation. It was in the mind of

Lord Salisbury's Government that the administration might be handed over to a native ruler under conditions which would guarantee the rights and interests of the Imperial Government. It was known in Burma that a solution of this kind was under consideration, and the son of Prince Nyoung Yan—a boy of fourteen, bearing the strange name of Htack-Tin-oo-Zun—was generally supposed to have the best chance of being selected. An arrangement of this kind would have had certain advantages; it would have saved India from the burden of the financial deficit which is foreseen as the result of endowing Upper Burma at once with a somewhat costly European administration; and it would probably have restored tranquillity in Burma more speedily and less expensively than purely military measures. The reconstitution of a modified Burmese monarchy, would have estopped the claims of China to compensation, and postponed the hour when the British and French frontiers will become conterminous in the Indo-Chinese Peninsula.

All these considerations were fully present to the mind of the Government of India, and when I was writing this book they were not

unknown to me. But, aware that both the present and the late Ministry were acquainted with those weighty considerations, and that they had the full and even the sympathetic attention of Lord Dufferin, I am forced to conclude that, if they were not acted upon, there were reasons which, in the opinion of the responsible Ministers, and in that of Lord Dufferin, justified the annexation of the country in the most complete sense.

There should be no illusion, that the weary Titan has lightened his burdens by the annexation of Burma ; it will probably be found that he has added considerably to their weight. But a Titan can bear a good deal upon his shoulders ; and, even when weary, he can go very far. There is room, perhaps, for misgivings ; but now that the die is cast, it is best to accept the new situation, and turn it to the best account for Burma and for the Empire.

GRATTAN GEARY.

BOMBAY, *February 26, 1886.*

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CHAPTER I.

FROM ARYAN INDIA TO MONGOL BURMA.

A Derelict Empire—Impatience for a Decree of Annexation—Desirability of studying the Problem on the Spot—Across the British Indian Empire—Its vast Extent—The Mongolian Races—Burman Aversion to Sheep—The Question of Annexation—The Chief Commissioner's Opinion—Supposed Eagerness of the Burmans for our Rule—A Political Photograph—Crucifixion amongst the Burmese—Indo-Chinese Cruelty—Rope covered with Velvet.

WHEN the shock of arms in Upper Burma—slight but decisive—had ceased at the end of November last, and King Theebaw and his consorts had been deported to India, leaving the Empire of Alompra derelict in the hands of a British General, the political situation which then arose seemed to invite study on the spot. The Government that had ordained the overthrow of Theebaw, and had not shown an instant's hesitation in removing that monarch from his throne and his

capital, and sending him into exile in India, paused before deciding on the course which should be taken in disposing of the future of the immense country abandoned, without a struggle, as a helpless burden upon its hands. To those who had given special attention to the affairs of Burma, and were familiar with the political, financial, frontier, and other difficulties that had to be considered before taking up the threads of government which had proved too complicated for the late King and his advisers, the desire of the British Government to survey the ground before occupying it definitively was abundantly justified. But to the more numerous public who knew nothing of such difficulties the delay in issuing a decree of annexation and converting all Burma, Upper and Lower, into a new Lieutenant-Governorship, appeared altogether inexplicable. It seemed to me desirable to examine carefully some of the conditions of the problem, and see for myself what were the political, social, and military aspects of the questions awaiting solution. No one even pretended to know what were the wishes or capabilities of the Burmese of the Upper country, and the only means of learning anything about them was to go to

Mandalay and endeavour to hear there, and on the way, what the people most directly concerned, next to ourselves, had to say on the subject.

Acting upon this view, I left Bombay on the 7th December, 1885, and proceeded to Burma by the most expeditious route, *via* Calcutta.

A very good idea of the transverse extent of the British Indian Empire may be formed by setting out in the mail-train at Bombay on a given evening and proceeding as fast as steam will permit to the further frontier of British Burma, and beyond to Mandalay and to Bhamo, which are now dependencies of the Empire. Sixty hours' rail to Calcutta, sixty hours' steaming to Rangoon, a night's rail to Prome, a week's steam to Mandalay. Three or four days' further steam will take you to Bhamo, a thousand miles up the Irrawady, where you may rest for a few days before crossing the intervening territory to the Chinese frontier. Count up the hours and the miles, and you will see that you have got over a good deal of this planet's circumference.

On board the British India steamer *Ethiopia*, a large and well-appointed vessel which takes us from Calcutta to Rangoon, we become aware of the fact that we are parting company with the Aryan population of India, and we begin to make

the acquaintance of the Mongolian races which have hitherto enjoyed undivided sway in the further East.

There is a various and interesting human cargo. Burmese ladies, whom we mistake for Chinese until we observe that the complexion is either more fair or more dark, and is not that of the golden guinea; Armenians, Jains, Buddhists, a Mussulman merchant returning to Mandalay from Mecca. We have also a flock of sheep for Rangoon; British Burma importing its mutton, as it has to import its potatoes and its salt. It appears that the Burmans do not like the flavour of mutton, preferring that of goat. They detect in mutton a disagreeable taint of wool, which is unpleasant. Consequently the goat—in Burma a large and well developed animal—occupies a much higher place in general, and even in royal estimation, than the sheep. King Mindoo-Min used to give a thousand rupees for a big goat, and boasted that he possessed the finest goats in the world.

We carry the English mails to Burma; and they suggest politics. The Anglo-Burmans on board are annexationists to a man. Every one is jubilant at the easy overthrow of Theebaw, and at the enhanced energy which is manifested in

foreign affairs. A rumour that after all Upper Burma may not be annexed, and reduced to a province, excites indignation. Upper Burma has annexed itself; why should we give it away to some intriguer, who will follow in the footsteps of Theebaw? The Chief Commissioner, Mr. Bernard, is acknowledged to be a clear-headed man of much experience; but I am told that his unwillingness to reduce Upper Burma to the condition of a province is due to an extraordinary predilection for Burman ideas and sentiments. He imagines that the Burmese dote on a monarch; that the King at Mandalay, whether Theebaw or another, is the god of their idolatry, and he holds that it would be foolish to cross them when it is so easy to realise their ideal. But the Chief Commissioner might, it is urged, reflect that if the Burmans pay an idle homage to the idea of a King of their race, they prefer in practice to enjoy the immunity from crucifixion, disembowelling, and other agencies of civilisation which they procure in British territory. There are nearly four hundred thousand Upper Burmans now living in British Burma, and more would no doubt come if they could. If they cannot come to the British flag,

why should not the British flag go to them, or rather, why should it not stay amongst them now that Providence has sent it in bloodless triumph to Mandalay? That is what my Anglo-Burman fellow-passengers want to know. This absolute conviction that the Burmans are eager to be annexed is exhilarating, and I feel that we have at last discovered a reasonable and reasoning population which has an enlightened sense of their own interests and have none of the prejudices which render the task of governing other people so thankless. The Burmans are always conceived of by Anglo-Burmans as a sensible folk who know that it is best for them to be delivered from the results of their own incapacity for government. And the millions of toiling and trading Shans, and the tens of thousands of other tribes, some of whom are already Christians, though others are still no better than savages, are all anxious to be friends with us, if we will but be friends with them.

We have on board a photograph of a crucified Burman—one of fifty, it is said, put to the most aggravated form of death on the cross by order of Theebaw. The fifty may be apocryphal, but there appeared to be scarcely room for the same doubt about the reality of the horror of crucifixion,

that there was about the Rev. Mr. McColl's impaled Bulgarians on the banks of the Danube. The viewless sockets from which the eyes have been plucked, both the stumps of the feet slashed off at the insteps, the mouth hideously enlarged to permit of the tearing out of the tongue, the body cut open and eviscerated, are to all appearance the truth-telling of the sun, and no fiction. The cross was made to do the office of the rack for the extended limbs, as well as that of "a bed of ease" on which the victim was vivisected. Anything more realistically horrible was, perhaps, never photographed. The artist was the special correspondent of the *Indian Daily News*. Around the photograph was a copy of an article in which the editor of that paper apologised for afflicting the human sight, but said it was necessary to show what the world and humanity would gain by annexing the kingdom which was ruled till yesterday by Theebaw.

It is right, however, to be a little sceptical as to the teaching even of a photograph. I must admit that the Calcutta paper took me in, when it described the crucified as the victim of revolting barbarity. I learned later on that in every case death is inflicted before crucifixion, the Burmans in this respect unconsciously follow-

ing the method with which Cæsar reconciled his promise to crucify his pirate captors with the humanity of a Roman gentleman. In Burma the mode of inflicting the preliminary death is not strangulation; a blow on the back or neck with a club, or the punch of a practised elbow on the spine, is the preliminary of the cross. The exposure on the bamboo espalier is dreaded above all things as the last infamy. The practice of hanging felons in chains, so general in Europe in the last century, had doubtless the same purpose. It was not a cruel but it was certainly a revolting practice. The progress of civilisation will put an end to the crucifixion of the corpse in Burma, as it has put an end to that of hanging in chains in Europe.

The dark places of the world are the abode of cruelty. Having let light into Upper Burma, such horrors will henceforth be impossible. But sentiment is an unsafe guide in these things in politics. Scarcely a century ago Damiens, when he gave himself the only consolation possible in the words, "*La journée sera dure, mais elle passera,*" would have been glad to exchange with Theebaw's victims. And it was not under the old French

monarchy alone that a hundred years since political offenders were cut up alive as an example to the wicked. The practice of humanity towards criminal or political offenders in the hands of retributive justice has been of very recent growth anywhere. An honest tiger might give a much-needed lecture to man on the sinfulness of useless cruelty to those whose fate it is to be put to death for the happiness or profit of his executioner. The Iudo-Chinese are, like their Chinese cousins, apparently unembarrassed by any bowels of compassion whatever, when translating their sonorous platitudes about the sacredness of the life of all creatures into practice for the benefit of the enemies of authority. But as we shall learn, they are by no means wantonly or habitually cruel. They are merciless when under the influence of passion, or when the circumstances seem to call for exceptional severities. But it is characteristic of the Burmese turn of mind to cover the rope, which is to strangle a prince, with soft velvet so that it may not inflict needless suffering or humiliation on the victim.

CHAPTER II.

THE BURMESE IN RANGOON.

Thibetan Origin of the Burmese—Intolerant Buddhists—View of Life—Objection to Drudgery—Desire to minimise the Evil of Existence—The Rangoon River—Prosperity of Rangoon—The Town built of Wood—Ephemeral Leases—Foresight of Government—Lord Dalhousie and the Royal Gardens—House Rent in Rangoon—Clubs—The Burmese Citizens—A Mussulman's Opinion of them—Loving Kindness to Animals—Refusal to drink Milk from Religious Motives—King Mindoo-Min—The Dufferin Fund in British Burma—Need for Improvement—Difficulty of Effecting Burmese Habits—Tattooing—The Burmese Woman—Simplicity of the Marriage System—The Chinese Immigration—Other Race—Madraseses, Suratis, Armenians, and Jews—Municipal Government.

THREE days steaming from Calcutta introduces us to a race, a civilization and a religion wholly different from what we have left behind in India. We find ourselves among a people, of whom the basis is Mongol, who have com

•southward from Thibet at a period not very remote, devout but not fanatical Buddhists, free from caste prejudices, tolerant in manners and habits, allowing women their rightful place in social and family life, vegetarians in theory, but in practice, eclectic in the matter of food. The Burman takes a more genial view of life—which he knows to be a transient evil that will pass—than does the native of India, who is a pessimist, and he avoids sordid cares and the drudgery of hard work. He is free-handed, generous, giving freely of what he has, not laying up riches for himself which cannot be of any use to him in the next existence, nor disturbing himself about the support of posterity which will be fed and maintained as the all other generations have been. He has acquired the character among thoughtless people of being lazy; but at times, when there is an adequate motive he can work with a sort of frenzy to get the seed into the ground, or reap the harvest. Why should he be a slave always, and have no time to think of the mysteries of religion, to smoke the long cigarette, to gossip and make this sinful existence pass over with the minimum of unpleasantness? Labour is a disagreeable necessity which at times must be faced, but to

labour perpetually in order that somebody else's business may be done—the guerdon being money for which there is no particular use—does not seem to him to be a good in itself. He is quite willing to allow natives of India, and Chinamen, or any one else to come and reap his harvests, and eject him by degrees from the various money-making callings; but he will make his life enjoyable as far as he can, while that unfortunate affair lasts; when it ends, if all goes well there will be the complete happiness of non-existence.

- We shall find that this order of ideas very sensibly colours the life of Burmans alike in Upper and in Lower Burma. We shall scarcely have stepped over the quay in Rangoon before it is borne in upon us that we are in the midst of a population whose point of view differs fundamentally from that which we have been accustomed to in India.

To arrive at Rangoon, which is the best and most striking example of the benefits of British rule in Lower Burma, it is necessary to steam for some hours up the Rangoon river—one of the many mouths of the Irrawady. This river might easily pass for the lower reaches of the Hugli, the width being about the same; and the

country on either hand being level, and covered with an abundance of jungle, with here and there marshes and lakelets. There is little sign of cultivation, and the population, where there is any, is sparse and poor.

The city of Rangoon is of recent growth, and is evidently prosperous and ambitious. Two fine pagodas, conspicuous above all other buildings, differentiate it at first view from Indian cities; but it is obviously a modern port, a place of business before all, and the pagodas with all their graceful curves and bright gilding soon come to be regarded as of subordinate interest and importance. The river is wide and deep, and on one bank there are quays on which are erected the custom-house, the court of justice, and other large buildings, while warehouses and the like continue the long line. A tramway, now worked by steam locomotives, runs round on their farther side and facilitates intercommunication. The city is well and simply planned. Certain leading thoroughfares, a hundred feet wide, are parallel to each other, and are connected by cross-streets, two of each alternate set of the latter being known by numbers in the American fashion—as 38th street, 37th street,

the third being named, as Phayre St., Barr-street, &c. The streets are kept very clean; at all events the principal of them are well swept. The drainage is said to be bad where it exists at all, and in the lanes and bye-ways, there is a proportionate amount of disease.

On the whole, Rangoon may be considered healthy. There is an abundant supply of good water, which no doubt contributes to this result. The breezes from the Gulf of Martaban and down the river and the cool nights resulting from the heavy dews count for much. The port ranks next to Calcutta and Bombay in the extent of its commerce, which is large, and shows a constant tendency to expansion. Fed by a thousand miles of navigable river, surpassing the Ganges in volume and value, it could not well be otherwise than prosperous, even if it were not the chief port of entry for all Burma, Lower and Upper.

There are many imposing buildings in Rangoon, which seems to have kept its eye on Bombay in ordering its structural life; but the number of houses built of wood soon comes to be noticed, and it gives to the city an appearance of youth and immaturity scarcely harmonising with the general pretensions of the place. The fact

that Burma is the country of teak, in part accounts for the free use of timber in street architecture. But what has perhaps a greater influence on the selection of the building material is that until recently the provident Government which is the ground-landlord refused to grant building-leases for more than fifteen years, and even now will not consent to give them for a longer period than thirty. In the course of a few years, the unearned increment will be so considerable, that the State-landlord will make a great deal of money by selling its land for what it will then bring. Meanwhile, however the growth of the town is retarded. People are unwilling to build on ephemeral leases, and they satisfy their immediate needs by running up timber houses.

Fortunately the abundance and cheapness of teak, which is not quite the price that it usually is in Bombay, enables the structure to be of generous space. Many houses commence at the first floor, what might have been the ground-floor forming part of the garden. The houses thus constructed seem to stand upon stilts ; they have the advantage of being safeguarded from the damp and possible malaria, which might make them feverish if they were built directly

on the soil. It might be worth the attention of the Government of Bombay to recommend the Government of India to follow for special reasons the example of the Government of British Burma, in regard to the system of short leases, though the latter is of itself open to criticism. At present there is, and there will be for many years to come, a quantity of Government land in Bombay, which is absolutely idle and unproductive, because the Government hold out for high prices which no one can afford to pay. Rather than continue unprofitably to play the dog in the manger, Government might let the land on fifteen years' building leases, which would be sufficient to induce speculators to run up very good timber houses and shops, which would soon be occupied.

Lord Dalhousie, when he visited Rangoon, after the annexation, presented the city with the magnificent royal gardens as a public park and place of recreation. There is a series of beautiful little lakes in this lovely plaisance which Bombay may envy Rangoon. One of the lakes has been utilised as a reservoir, which is fed from the source of the water-supply from the city. The best lands are built on a rising ground, beyond the Dalhousie Park, which forms the Malabar Hill of Rangoon. These houses are for the most

part built of teak, but on a scale which would probably be deemed extravagant if the materials were stone and lime. With such a dearth of house accommodation in Bombay, it may be well to turn to teak, supplemented by iron—to supply the pressing needs of the roofless public. With Upper Burma tranquillised, the produce of immense forests, still untouched by the axe of man, will probably be opened up, and teak will become plentiful, and if not cheap, yet less dear. Very fine upper-storied bungalows which could not in Bombay be procured for less than Rs. 350 a month, are to be had in Rangoon from Rs. 170 to a maximum of Rs. 200. Fires are not dreaded in Rangoon, for there, as in Bombay, the mildness of the climate renders fire-places and chimneys quite superfluous. In Bombay, it would be quite possible to insulate from other buildings the wooden houses which might be built more or less temporarily on such waste spaces as the Oval and near Back Bay, and on Cumballa Hill.

In the important matter of Clubs, Rangoon is as well provided as Bombay. It possesses the Pegu Club, the Burma Club, and the Gymkhana. To the latter ladies are admitted. There is a lawn-tennis ground and a cricket ground, read-

ing-rooms, billiard-rooms, and other attractions, which make the Gymkhana a general rendezvous every evening. Calcutta possesses no club which is civilised enough to admit ladies ; Bombay and Rangoon have that glory to themselves, alone in all Asia.

The population at large is, as I have said, Burmese and Buddhistic. The Burmese, I was told by a Mussulman merchant from the north of India not at all given to philosophising, but confirming the estimates of the characteristics of the race arrived at from other sources are a nice people, good-natured, and not so difficult to manage as people in India. But he added that there are very few honest men amongst them ; they will tell you lies and play you tricks. Whence it is to be presumed that, like the rest of the human family, the Burmese are a compound of good and bad qualities. I hear on all hands that they are sympathetic and that their family life is very loving. They are charitable and kindly to a degree, said my Mussulman friend ; they spend their money freely on themselves and upon their friends. They prefer to build a pagoda or endow a religious house to heaping up wealth for themselves or their posterity. To take animal life is sinful. Ani-

mals are beings going through a period of tribulation, more deserving of pity and alleviation than that of man himself. Therefore, though there are plenty of cows in the country, the Burmese never, or hardly ever, drink milk, and then only in imitation of European selfishness. The calf has the sole right to the enjoyment of its mother's milk, and it is left at the teat for three years. He prayeth best who loveth best all things, both great and small. I hear of these maxims for the guidance of life and of their general acceptance, whenever the beliefs of the Burmese are discussed. A Burmese mother nurses her own children for two-and-a-half or three years, and it is not an uncommon thing for her to suckle a young goat at one breast while giving nourishment to her infant at the other. Who knows but that the goatling is a temporary tabernacle of some dear one, a friend or sister in a former existence? The religious soul is kindly for every living thing. We are all going the weary round of 1,40,000 manifestations; and we may, any of us be imprisoned for a time greater or less in the next existence, if we make any mistake in this. To be is to sin, so we are none of us safe. The not-to-be—the final *nirvanah* or non-existence—can

only be arrived at by great care and circumspection and most loving kindness. Mandalay is a holy city in which no living thing can be put to death. If all our brothers and sisters, and cousins and aunts must be put out of the way, it is necessary to know nothing about the deed and to be very careful not to give the order one's self. The King Mindoo-Min, who preceded Theebaw—a very politic and sagacious ruler—could boast that he never gave an order for any execution. He only inquired of the Minister-in-Waiting—“Is he yet there?” And somehow he soon ceased to be there; the proprieties, religious and political, were never outraged.

The Dufferin Fund is finding its way to British Burma, where there is great room for a revolution in the method of treating women at the most critical periods of their lives. Burmese womanhood is, however, conservative in its instincts, and it is feared that there will be a stubborn disposition to resist any attempt at innovation. The native lady here is subjected to a terrible ordeal the moment her child sees the light. She is painted all over with a heating ointment, and then placed close to a blazing fire and surrounded with hot bricks. She is kept on the simmer for seven whole days, during which

she is drenched with hot drinks of a formidable kind. At the end of the seven days, says Mr. Scott, the author of the charming book—"Burma and the Burmans"—the girl of fifteen is transformed into a woman of thirty, already wrinkled with premature age. But Burman opinion is fanatically in favour of perpetuating this system of treatment, which, strange to say, kills but few victims at the time. They point to catastrophes in European households to show the folly of western modes of treatment, and resent any advice to abandon the time-honoured Burmese system. It would be interesting to know whether any similar system of stewing and roasting young mothers prevails in Thibet at the present day, or prevailed formerly. The cold of that climate might be a reason for so singular a practice. The Burmese have retained many Thibetan customs; perhaps that of putting the suffering woman in an improvised oven to keep her from catching cold on the icy table-land of Central Asia is a case of survival.

There are three things to which a Burman must submit in his passage through this life—smallpox, the tattooing of handsome patterns from waist to knee, and the wearing of the yellow monk's dress for a time, long or short,

according to the degree of his piety. But there is one thing which he abstains from doing as if under a religious obligation; he does not work for his living, if he can help it. He is, according to the general verdict of Anglo-Burmans, very lazy, and, besides, he believes implicitly that his womankind were sent into the world to do the work, and save him trouble. The women-kind share this belief, and do their allotted part like men. So the country goes on tolerably well. The men make cigarettes—a foot long and an inch in diameter—and the women work and are happy.

There is a growing Chinese community in Rangoon, and the Chinamen, not bringing women of their race, marry Burmese women, the marriage system being delightfully simple and accommodating in this interesting country. You marry a lady by drinking a cup of tea with her, and she is your wife until you get tired of her, or want to go back to your country. Then you divorce her or she divorces you; you arrange for the support of the children, and the marriage is at an end. She seeks and finds another husband, and if you are incorrigible, you seek another wife. There is nothing in this to frighten a Chinaman, who is so bashful

generally when abroad that he lives a life of single blessedness. He marries a Burmese girl, and the children are a great improvement on the Burmese males. They inherit industry from both parents and grow up models of hard-working thrifty citizens. To them, according to men of foresight, will belong the future of Burma.

There are those who believe that the Chinese, either whole or half-blood, will become a potent factor in the Golden Chersonese. Eighty thousand of that innumerable race are now at Singapore, where they have begun to overflow to Rangoon. At present they come by sea. When the connection between Upper and Lower Burma becomes more intimate, as it is certain to be, they will come down the Irrawady in thousands, where they now come in scores and hundreds. There is plenty of room for them, for neither of the Burmas is one-third populated. Tenasserim, for instance, has only some half-a-dozen inhabitants to each square mile of its fertile soil. In Upper Burma, the population is very sparse, away from the banks of the rivers. The settled order henceforth to prevail in the further Burma will facilitate the progress of the Chinese immigration, until now checked

by the rough and ready methods available to an exclusive society desirous of showing its antipathy to intruders. Even as it is, at Bhamo and Mandalay, Chinese traders have made good their footing and formed communities, which knew how to vindicate their rights against the royal subordinates, and even against the monarchs themselves. So long ago as 1860, when the then King decreed that the inhabitants of Amarapura—the former capital—should remove under pain of death to the plain where the new capital—Mandalay—was to be, while all else obeyed, the Chinese stood fast and refused to budge. Their trade brought revenue to the court, so that it was advisable not to break with them, and they were allowed to continue to reside at Amarapura, instead of transferring their houses and goods to Mandalay, some three or four miles off. This stubborn and laborious people will inevitably profit most by the opening up of all Burma to the enterprise of mankind.

Besides the Europeans, the Burmese and the Chinese in Rangoon, there are settlers or birds-of-passage of other denominations. Calcutta and Madras—and Surat, though distant—contribute each a quota. Madras sends the most worthless of her domestic servants, and they

must be employed for want of others ; at Rangoon no Burmans will take service, though they can be sometimes induced to do so up-country. Armenians and Jews, chiefly from India, have also their acknowledged place in the community. The Municipality consists of a Town Committee to which each section of the community sends its own representatives who elect a president. The Government nominate a certain number of Commissioners who have the same status as the elected members, the latter having the majority as in Bombay. The municipal constitution is regarded as working satisfactorily ; and the Burmese take a fair share of the labour, in spite of the apathy in matters of public interest which is so generally attributed to them. Rangoon has a great future before it ; but it is doubtful whether the Burmese are destined to compete successfully with more laborious and enterprising races for the larger share of the results of its prosperity.

CHAPTER III.

TROUBLES IN UPPER BURMA.

Troubles in Upper Burma—Tragedy on the Chinwin—The Bombay-Burma Corporation's Elephants—Criticism on the Military—The Disturbances in Mandalay—Mr. Moylan sent back to Rangoon—General Uncertainty—Reasons of the apparent Inaction of the Military—Troops disappointed of a Battle.

• On the evening of Monday, the 13th December, I took the train at Rangoon Station of the Burma State Railway, for Prome, a small town one hundred and sixty miles to the north, on the Irrawady. By overtaking, at the cost of a night's railway journey, one of the Flotilla Company's fine three-deckers at Prome, three days of voyage on the lower Irrawady are saved. The railway is on the narrow gauge, and the carriages are small, but the economy of time makes it worth while to get to Prome by rail, rather than by the most tedious part of the great river.

On the Monday there were unpleasant rumours in Rangoon that the troubles in Upper Burma, which had seemed to be over, were likely to break

out in a new form. The troops occupied points on the river to Mandalay, and a force was under orders to proceed from the Burman capital to Bhamo, which is considered in Rangoon the commercial centre of operations, the coveted Chinese trade-route having there its point of departure. The isolation of these troops in this distant expedition was destined to give time for the development of a movement of resistance throughout the country not then anticipated.

The Chinese have become the strongest element in the population of Bhamo, and have rather the upper hand of the Burmese, who are the legal and ostensible rulers. The trade is chiefly carried on by the Chinese, and the best houses belong to them. Europeans, who have visited Bhamo, report that the old situation was one that suited the Chinese very well, for they can do practically very much what they like with the Burmese authorities, but that the idea of being brought under the strong rule of a British administration like that at Rangoon is unpleasant to them. The town having been taken recently by Chinese and Kachydens, and having been formerly occupied by a Chinese force, the district has come to be regarded as a debateable land. A somewhat undefined suzerainty, which

China claims over Burma, is held to be more substantial in regard to Bhamo and the districts around, which are in a manner flanked by a projecting angle of the province of Yunan to the eastward. Bhamo was of importance in the eyes of the Burmese Kings on account of the gold and ruby mines, and it was to protect the latter that they kept a garrison in Bhamo. These mines have of course equal value in the eyes of the Chinese traders. It was understood in December that the Chinese Government had preferred a formal claim to Bhamo and the neighbouring districts, and a delay which occurred in the advance of the British expedition from Mandalay to Bhamo was generally attributed to an exchange of diplomatic communications upon the subject. The town was eventually occupied without opposition, the Burmese garrison of two hundred and fifty men surrendering without resistance. But the Chinese Government soon after preferred a formal claim for the cession of Bhamo and the adjacent territories up to the river Shwee-Lee, which falls into the Irrawady some miles south of Bhamo. That some claims of this kind would be made by the Chinese was foreseen in Lower Burma, almost from the beginning, but the

resources of diplomacy were counted upon as sufficient to tide over that difficulty.

By the middle of December it became evident that the work to be done would involve a considerable amount of unexpected friction. The announcement that Bhamo was to be occupied gave, of course, general satisfaction; but the supposed immobility of the troops at points along the river was held to give the dacoits time to organise for active operations throughout the country, east and west of the river. Ten thousand dacoits were known to be already in movement. They were strong in the valley of the Chinwin River, which flows from Manipura, in the far north, parallel to the Irrawady, into which river it falls, a little to the south-west of Ava and Mandalay. Ten Europeans, in the employ of the Bombay-Burma Corporation in that district, were making northwards to Manipura. A telegram from the latter place stated that it was reported there, that some of the Europeans were killed and that rest remained prisoners.

To the east of the Irrawady, and to the north of our frontier, matters were not going well. The dacoits had been strengthened by the fugi-

tives from the fort, on the left bank of the river opposite Minclah.

Seventy-six elephants belonging to the same Corporation of the value of a lakh-and-a-half had been taken, and were known to be on the way to the Shan country. The Company's agent, Mr. Jones, made an urgent application to the civil officer at Ningyan, a point beyond the frontier whether a detachment of troops had been sent, to pursue the dacoits and recover the elephants; the company, if necessary, paying all expenses. If this were impracticable the authorities were asked to furnish arms and an officer to enable the company's employes to retake the elephants. The civil officer said, he could not give either money or arms; as the orders were that the troops should not advance, or leave their present position. On the western bank of the Irrawady, things were even more unsatisfactory; Minlakwa, the Governor-General of Minclah, a stern old officer who had offered a stubborn defence at Minclah itself, where no resistance was expected, had retired with his soldiers on Salinmyo, some fifty miles higher up the river, and was a source of alarm on that side. To the north of Mandalay the dacoits

were also mustering, and, as was reported, had fired upon the steamers proceeding to Bhamo.

Such was the general situation on the 13th December. There was a disposition among Anglo-Burmans to blame what appeared to be the want of energy in the attitude of the army in Upper Burma. An unfavourable impression undoubtedly prevailed, partly due, no doubt, to the accounts which had been heard of the disorders which occurred in Mandalay on the first night of the occupation. A great deal of misconception seems to have prevailed in regard to the occurrences on that night, and the equanimity of the military authorities was strongly disturbed by criticism which was under the circumstances natural. The troops, having been on foot all day, were in the evening marched back from the city to the steamers for their dinner. Guards had been placed in the palace to secure the rich prize which had there been seized ; and troops were sent to the city, but they were not distributed so as to police it. Indeed Mandalay was left virtually unguarded.

The Burmese police system had been efficient, the city being divided into districts under the very effectual control of detachments placed in guard-houses. The practice was to draw a cord

across the thoroughfares passing the guard-houses, and to permit no Burman to pass the cords after six in the evening. Europeans might obtain permission to pass, but only on giving their names and stating their business.

This severe form of curfew-law kept Mandalay quiet and reasonably secure under the King. But when the Burmese Court fell, the whole system came to an end, and the police abandoned the guard-houses and left the city. The result was that Mandalay was on that night completely at the mercy of the budmashes, to say nothing of the disbanded soldiers who, though disarmed, were hungry and desperate, no provision having been made for their maintenance. The neglect to provide for the disbanded soldiers, leaving them without rations, or pay, or orders, was the cause of many of the mischiefs which subsequently arose. But in the confusion and rush of the scarcely hoped for surrender of King and Kingdom without a blow, the staff may be excused if details relating to the Burmese army and its needs were unfortunately overlooked. That happened on the night after the surrender which was certain to happen. Gangs of dacoits, helped by some of the disbanded soldiers, who were not all disarmed, pillaged, and, when they were resist-

ed, murdered, without let or hindrance. Amongst the few Europeans still in the city, were Mr. Jones and Mr. Kennedy, business men of influence in Burma, and Mr. Moylan, the *Times*' special correspondent. These gentlemen, like others, heard the murderous tumult going on from evening till 2 o'clock in the night, and in the morning they forwarded a letter to General Prendergast reporting what had taken place, and requesting that patrols should be sent into the city to prevent the recurrence of dacoities and murder.

The General Commanding appears to have resented this communication. Colonel Bengough visited the city and informed the gentlemen who forwarded the letter that they were civilians, having no business to be in Mandalay, and that, if they wanted patrolling duty done, they should do that duty themselves. It was denied that there had been any real disturbance, and it was affirmed that only one man was killed. But Mr. Andreino, the Italian Consul, was cited as a witness who had counted six dead bodies in one compound, while other Europeans had seen bodies elsewhere.

The controversy which thus arose took an unexpected development. Mr. Moylan was accused of having despatched a telegram, which had not

been signed by the Press Commissioner, to the *Times*, giving an account of an interview with the King after his surrender. Mr. Moylan contended that he acted within his right; that the regulation simply was to the effect that the Press Commissioner might insist upon seeing telegrams, at his discretion, but that the functionary in question had made no request of the kind, and was not indeed doing censorial duty at all since he was disabled by a wound at Minelah. The upshot was that Mr. Moylan was directed to leave Mandalay and return to Rangoon, which he did. Whence he soon returned, armed with an authorisation from the Secretary of State and an assurance that he would be neither molested nor annoyed in the performance of his journalistic duties.

Having heard and read of these things, and some more, during a day's stay in Rangoon, I stepped into the night train for Prome, and arrived at the station on the Irrawady on Tuesday morning at half-past 7 o'clock.

Thus a fortnight after the surrender of Theebaw with his capital and kingdom the first burst of exultation and satisfaction with which the striking success of the expedition had been greeted, was succeeded by a feeling that things

were still in a disagreeable state of uncertainty. There was a disposition to censure the military authorities for allowing dacoity to raise its head. The desire was very general that a resort to severe measures of repression should put an end to anarchy, and allow trade to profit without delay by the overthrow, so easily effected, of the misgovernment of the King. The real nature of the difficulties which had now to be met was very inadequately appreciated in Lower Burma.

With respect to the disturbances in Mandalay, about which there has been so much controversy, we shall learn, as we approach the city itself, that it is by no means so certain as the public in Rangoon believed that if military guards had been placed throughout the city on the first night of the occupation the tranquillity would have been unbroken and the sense of security undisturbed. It is the opinion of men who were acquainted with all the circumstances that the posting of guards in isolated points of the unlighted and terrified city during the dark night, would probably have led to collisions between the Burmese and the soldiers, and that the very existence of the city might have been brought into jeopardy. There are only two brick or stone built houses in all Mandalay, the city

being composed of teakwood structures side by side with fragile bamboo houses, the walls of which are made of matting ; all so much tinder. It is needless to say that there is not a fire-engine or a fire-bucket in the whole capital.

There were several considerations which could not be disregarded. The troops were bitterly disappointed at not having had the satisfaction of a battle or a fight of any kind to compensate for the irksomeness of the advance. Moreover, they had been under arms all day without food, and if they had been ordered to remain on duty in the midst of a presumably hostile population surrounding them in the darkness of the night, they would certainly have been in a mood which would have brooked little provocation. A chance shot might have been the signal for a general disturbance. The Burmese in Mandalay fire off guns during the night simply to give themselves confidence in moments of danger or excitement. Under such circumstances there would have been something more than the probability of a collision between the Burmans and the guards, and the result might easily have caused the destruction of the city. The mischief which might be done during the night by the *budmashes* desiring to profit by the occasion to pillage the

well-to-do inhabitants was therefore less formidable than that of a misunderstanding during the night between irritated soldiers and the terror-stricken and probably vindictive inhabitants of the city.

And so of the impatience at the assumed fierceness of the troops in the presence of the incipient movements of the dacoits. The force which was sent into Upper Burma was inconsiderable, though it proved more than sufficient for the task of overthrowing Theebaw and occupying Mandalay, as it was deemed desirable to send forward a force at once to occupy Bhamo, where we might possibly be forestalled by a Chinese force. The troops available were not more than sufficient to occupy posts to secure the long line of communications by the river. A small body was thrown forward to Ningyan, where it was soon isolated, an expedition which was despatched from Mandalay to join hands with it having to be given up. With this exception all the posts, ten in number, were established along the river, which was thus barely held in sufficient strength. An attempt to occupy and hold the whole country east and west of the river was beyond the means available. All that could be done was to hold

the capital and the line of communications and send forward an expedition to seize Bhamo. It was not possible to establish posts and settled authority throughout the districts, three-fourths of which were still in the hands of the Burmese. As will be seen, the measures taken a little later on, to put an end to dacoity by military executions, carried out by small expeditions of fifty or hundred men sent to a distance from their posts of one or two days' march, failed to restore order. The villagers combined, and in many cases made common cause with the dacoit leaders. The bands of a score or two of marauders were succeeded by bodies numbering many hundreds, and even thousands, mere dacoity developing rapidly into a more or less general guerilla warfare. At the outset, the passive attitude of the troops, which excited so much comment in Lower Burma, was due to the necessities of the situation, and the departure from it did not produce the satisfactory results so confidently predicted.

It was not understood in the Lower country that the military expedition which had so promptly overturned the Burmese government, was not sufficiently numerous for the military occupation of a country of more than twice the area of Lower Burma, and much more difficult to

traverse and control. Colonel Sladen, the political officer with the expedition, with the concurrence of the military authorities and the Government of India, endeavoured, by political means, to bring the districts still in Burmese hands back into administrative relation with Mandalay. The Hlootdaw was induced to continue its functions, and the King's War Minister, the Tyndah, the only man remaining in Mandalay possessing any personal influence or force of character, was retained in the Hlootdaw in spite of a load of suspicion which weighed upon his name in reference to the tragedy which attended Theebaw's accession to the throne and the more recent massacre in October, 1884. The result of this policy, which was undoubtedly bold and sagacious, was that the majority of the Woons or Prefects entered into relations with the Hlootdaw, of which Colonel Sladen was the President. They either consented to obey, as far as they could, the injunctions of the Council at Mandalay, or they handed over their functions to its nominees. This gave a certain influence and control to the Hlootdaw, now under British influence, throughout the country. But inasmuch as the Hlootdaw had no longer at its disposal the King's navy of ten steamers and a

number of war boats, or the King's army or the public money, it was not in a position to enforce prompt obedience, or sustain the Woons, if their authority be disregarded. Colonel Sladen, we shall find, has made it a cardinal point of his policy to restore the prestige of the Hlootdaw, as the readiest means of re-establishing the authority of Mandalay over the provinces. The impatience of the Anglo-Burman at what he considers a weak and mischievous concession to Burmese opinion and feeling, has prevented Colonel Sladen's policy from being rightly understood, and has thrown considerable difficulties in its way.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DACOITS.

Mercantile Pioneers to Mandalay—Proposed Mission to the Shans—Revolt of that People against Theebaw—Proposed Railway to Mandalay—Dacoit Prisoners—Successful Raid—The Proclamation of Theebaw's Deposition—Burmese View of Dacoity—Burmese Punishment—General Character of the Country—Number of Pagodas—Plunder of the Villages—Flight to the Jungle—Villagers living on Roots—No Political Object in Dacoit Movement in its Beginning—Measures of Repression—Apparent Acquiescence of Population in the Conquest.

THE steamer which I and the other travellers by train expected to meet at Prome, where the railway ends, was the *Burma*, but she had not arrived, and we found that we had overtaken the preceding steamer, the *Thoorcah*—the *Sun*—which was the first commercial steamer proceeding to Mandalay since the outbreak of hostilities. Her previous voyage had been from Mandalay, bringing down King Theebaw and his Queens and immediate followers. She was taking up a few mercantile pioneers who had in view the extending of trade, and some nine

thousand bags of rice to supply Mandalay and the intermediate stations, some of which were known to be almost or quite foodless.

In the train had come Mr. Pilcher, of the Bengal Civil Service, summoned to Mandalay to receive instructions for a mission to the Shans. Those mountaineers, fierce and free,* will be offered the friendship and good offices of the new lords of Burma ; their independence will be assured to them, and they will be permitted to govern themselves as they please. The Burmese men always worrying them with the attempt to enforce the views of the Mandalay Court in the Shan Hills ; the result was a refusal to pay tribute and chronic warfare. It is hoped that a wiser policy may give peace, if it do not induce submission. But this is all in the future. For the present nothing is quite defined. Possibly the Shans may compound in the matter of tribute and pay the Paramount Power ten of the twenty lakhs a year which they yielded to Mandalay before Theebaw and Supaya Lat brought about the refusal to pay anything. We shall find that Mr. Pilcher stops for other work at the seat of the new administration, and that the Shans come raiding down almost to the gates of Mandalay and put the inhabitants into a great

fright. The politics of mountain clans are inscrutable.

All the same, Mr. Pilcher understands not only the Shans, but their language, as well as Burmese. I heard from natives, later on, that this gentleman's intimate acquaintance with the punctilio of Burmese forms of expression made him a *persona grata* to all classes. He has an intimate knowledge of that very difficult language. Mr. Rigg, of the Public Works Department, was also in the train, proceeding to Mandalay to accompany a column of troops ordered to march from the capital to the south-east to Ningyan, dispersing dacoits on its way. Mr. Rigg was to have nothing to do with the dacoits; it was intended that he should make a flying survey of the Sittang valley with a view to the prolongation of the Rangoon-Toungoo railway to Mandalay. But the development of dacoity and the difficulties to be encountered in a roadless country caused the postponement of the expedition, and Mr. Rigg had a little later on to return to Mandalay to await a more favourable opportunity.

On board the steamer were seated on the deck, in irons, six dacoits who had been taken prisoners within our frontier. They had, with others, per-

formed a rather clever feat; a body of police were driven from a small post and the raiders seized the policemen's wives and held them to ransom. The price obtained was Rs. 27 per wife. These six of the party were subsequently captured. Their object had been to raid cattle—and policemen's wives—and they had not killed any one. They were sent up to Minclab, which is within the theatre of war, to be "identified"—a word of ominous import. In British Burma they would have been tried for cattle stealing, and perhaps for interfering with the police in the performance of their duty. They might have been defended by men of law and the adventure might have been represented as a love affair deserving of sympathy. On the whole, the result might have been less portentous than the "identification" which now awaits them. They are common looking fellows; regular coolies with nothing of the fierce clausman or martial hero in their air. If Mr. Robert Phayre, the new Lieutenant-Governor of the lower reaches of the Irrawady, from the frontier to Pagan, be a physiognomist, he will probably shoot three or four of the prisoners at sight, who are old, and wrinkled, and sinister, and extend mercy to the younger persons, since

they are apparently harmless youths who have not an idea in their heads.

It is said—but the assertion is perhaps too sweeping—that dacoits are shot without trial when taken. There is some reason to believe that at least a few of the military when traversing the jungle, regard every armed Burmese as a dacoit, and the villagers found near the scene of a raid are in considerable peril in consequence. The order of Government is that all Burmese are to give up their arms, and of course refusal carries the death penalty under martial law. But the difficulty is this, that if a Burmese villager has no arms to defend himself he will be robbed by the dacoits, who have not, any more than himself, taken the trouble to read the long and stately proclamation in high Burmese issued at Mandalay by our authorities notifying the fall of Theebaw. Of literary Burmese they do not understand a word, and it may be doubted if any one does. The rural elector at home, who cannot decide whether to vote Tory or Liberal, is in an enviable state of mind compared to that in which the cultivators in Upper Burma find themselves when shut in between the devil and the deep sea. They will be shot as dacoits if they have arms ; if they have none,

they will be robbed and possibly murdered by the dacoits.

We hear and see a good deal about dacoity and the state of the country, as we go up the river, and make brief descents at big villages on the banks. We discover that in Burmese opinion dacoity is an honest, or, at all events, an excusable and natural employment for villagers in a time of civil war or general disturbance. Each village that does not wish to be the unresisting victim of its neighbours, sends out all the young men of valour and a sufficient number of more mature discretion, to get what they can lay their hands upon. They will, besides, be regarded by their friends and neighbours as wanting in public spirit if they do not take sides when the country is "out." They must go forth and take their share of danger and booty. They have no desire to kill or burn. But if you have grain they will confiscate it; if you have good clothes they will take them, and throw you down their old ones. In the unlikely case of your having any ready money they will thank you to hand it over; but they will not disdain loot of very modest value. They use country-made powder, often manufacturing it themselves. It is as nearly non-explosive as

if a roguish contractor had supplied it to them. They are bad shots, and their dahs are too light for heavy fighting.

An old villager told Mr. Pilcher that, of course, villagers go out and get what they can, when things are in confusion. In the war of 1852, when he was young, he had to become a dacoit himself. He went down the river to buy a rupee's worth of salt to sell again, and get food for his children. When he returned a man looted him. He could not go home with nothing in his hands, so he pounced on a man who was going along with a couple of pounds of grain. That compensated him for the loss of the salt, but before he reached home, a number of men met him and took the grain from him. So he went to a town and begged, and got something to take to his children. A young man that refused to do likewise, when the country was in commotion, would be set down as wanting in common sense and manliness. No one thinks the worse of him for going on a foraging expedition ; but if he showed the white feather he would be a lost man.

The woons, or governors of districts, naturally endeavour to keep the peace amongst the different villages over which they bear rule. Dacoity is defined in the Indian Penal Code as robbery by

violence committed by bands of not less than five men. In Burma, when not aggravated by atrocities dacoity used to be punished generally by fine. If the fine were not forthcoming, the defaulter was beaten with a stick. In cases which tried the patience of the wools, death was the penalty. When great cruelty or torture was chargeable, the body of the executed culprit was suspended on a cross of bamboos as an example to all evil-doers. This terrible spectacle was intended to discourage the practice of fastening a match between the two fingers of a victim and lighting the match and burning it, and the fingers. Another form of torture likely to entail crucifixion after death was the diabolical use of red-hot poker in good earnest as the clown does in fun at the merry Christmas time.

From Prome to Thayetmyo the course of the river is within the British boundary, and the Thoorcah took the day to get over the distance. A few hours' steaming next morning brought us to the actual frontier. The general character of the country on either bank remains the same. The banks are high, too high to admit of the irrigation of the plains east and west. The river has excavated a channel for itself from thirty to forty feet below the general level of the land.

When the snows melt in Thibet the water rises some forty feet, and submerges any part of the surrounding country which is below that level. To the north the river expands in this way in places to a breadth of twelve or fifteen miles. The river is only fed to a very trifling extent by the rainfall, which is inconsiderable; the Irrawady is perhaps the most enormous volume of melted snow in the whole world.

Throughout the voyage up the river, hills are visible to the westward, and at intervals they bound the plain to the eastward also. Villages are constantly coming into view, and pagodas picturesquely pitched on little eminences, are never out of sight. They are very graceful and add to the perfection of a grand expanse of bright landscape. The broad river flows for the most part between bold and varied banks which are often relieved by magnificent masses of foliage. The country on both sides of the frontier line seems to be half-populated. As we proceed we see the villages deserted, the inhabitants being scared out of their lives by dacoits on the one hand, and by our armed advent in the heart of the country on the other.

We soon learn that dacoity is under the circumstances inevitable; it has next to nothing,

in its present or first stage, to do with patriotism, or even with the desire of pillage; it is a fight for food. It will change its character before our eyes within the next two or three weeks, but now every officer, civil or military, vouches for the fact that it is in no way directed against the English. It is local in its aims and objects, if not in its general causes.

Last year there was a dearth in Upper Burma, and the enormous quantity of ninety-five thousand tons of rice was sent north from British Burma to supply the deficiency. There was then almost as a matter of course an outbreak of dacoity, which was kept in check with great difficulty by Theebaw's government. A thousand dacoits were taken prisoners and sent to Mandalay, where they were branded with a mark which, they were told, would stand them in lieu of a trial if they were again apprehended. The movement was checked by this and other means, but it was not entirely suppressed.

This season promised well, but the unsettled state of foreign relations undoubtedly interfered with the sowing, while later on the approach of the British forces checked the harvesting, and put an end to the petty trade and various local industries. Dacoity presented itself

as the usual resource under these circumstances, and the villagers have raided on their neighbours in search of grain. Villages which were plundered, or in danger, were abandoned, and the people took to the jungle, in some cases to the middle of the river in boats. On Wednesday the 15th December we went ashore, and found one large village with only two or three old women in it. They said, in answer to the kindly interrogatories of the Rev. Mr. Colbeck, who was one of the party, that the dacoits had been seen in the neighbourhood, and had looted some houses, and the inhabitants at once fled to the jungle; they were afraid to come back, for who could say but they might be killed? There was no one to make things go right, and the jungle was the safest place.

The next day, Thursday, the steamer stopped at Maginay, a place of some importance, and a party again went ashore. There were about thirty or forty decrepit persons, hiding as best they could. All the valid population had fled to the jungle. When the old men were asked how they lived, they said that they had had no rice for fifteen days past, and that they had pounded up the roots of the palm-tree and eaten them. They also ate the refuse of the teel seed. We

procured samples of those two articles of diet, which seemed to be quite uneatable. The men said they had nothing else to eat, and that they were starving; they had no rice and no money. Mr. Hedderwick, a Moulmein merchant, who was bringing up a quantity of rice for sale at Mandalay, generously invited the hungry folk to come to the steamer, where he opened a bag of rice and distributed the contents to them. Their surprise and thankfulness as they received the materials for an unaccustomed meal, testified to their need. We learned further on at another village, not so badly off, that the people in the villages a little inland were eating the pariah dogs. Mula Ismail, the well-known Mussulman merchant, formerly contractor for the Customs duties of Mandalay, presented twenty-five bags of rice to the inhabitants of Minelah, which had suffered severely during the fighting at the capture of that place.

So far, and until we get to the north, we hear that dacoity is not directed against the new comers; there is no apparent political object on the part of those who take up their dahs and go upon the war path. Every official we see when we land, tells us that the villages are at war with one another, each trying to pillage that it may not

itself be looted. No attacks have been directed against the military posts, and the sentinels are not molested. The opinion is that the disturbances will be soon put down; the shooting of all disturbers, it is confidently said, would put an end to dacoity at once. There is no misgiving on this point; but there is a good deal of regret that so much time had been wasted in deferring a remedy, which is relied on as infallible for the general uneasiness.

The resolute shooting of dacoits was then beginning, and no one appeared to have the slightest doubt as to the beneficial results which would arise from the adoption of a course so natural and just. We shall find, however, that the effect was not altogether so satisfactory as was anticipated. In another fortnight the dacoits will have had their attention directed to the presence of English soldiers at the fortified stations; the dacoity will expand in numbers and grow in its scope, and we shall have a guerilla war on our hands. We see the process of evolution by which the change comes about as we proceed up the river to Mandalay; when we return in ten or twelve days we shall hear that dacoity is fast becoming a hostile movement of the population;

that it is more harassing and more serious as time passes, and that there is a need for more troops, for cavalry, and for repressive measures of great severity. We shall hear that after all there is really nothing to be surprised at in this ; that in Lower Burma dacoity prevailed for two or three years after the country was annexed, and that five-and-twenty or thirty thousand men had to be employed. Why should we expect to find the difficulties less serious in Upper Burma ? It will be hard to say. But in the first two or three weeks after the occupation of Mandalay no one supposed that there would be any further trouble ; the general acquiescence of the population at large in the revolution effected, was regarded as self-evident.

CHAPTER V.

THE "ROYAL HAND" AT
MINELAH.

Development of Movement of Resistance—Inefficiency of the King's Defensive Arrangements--The Capture of Minelah—The Governor Minlakwa—The Royal Troops—Burmese View of an Ultimatum—The "Royal Hand's" Force—Sent for by Colonel Sladen—Burmese House Attacks—Land of Little Value—The Ancient Capital Pagan—Expedition through the Jungle.

BUT matters were soon to come to such a pass that before the end of January an eminent administrator, well acquainted with Burman politics, will be of opinion that the services of sixty thousand troops may be required to subjugate the whole country and a forced submission of the mobile population. This view of the possibilities of the case is one which I do not share ; but from what I could observe I think there are few who do not now realise that the subjugation of the whole country and the establishment of such an administration as exists in Lower Burma will be a difficult work,

requiring more troops and a good deal of time. When the hot weather sets in, the movements of troops can only be effected at a great sacrifice of health and life. This will delay the pacification of the country. Still this is taking things at their worst. Political skill may find a way to re-establish order more rapidly than is apparently within the reach of such military resources as are now on the spot.

Minelahn was the only place which had the honour of making even the semblance of a fight in resisting the advance of our forces. A hill on the east bank was fortified by Italian engineers and it looked formidable, but it had no defences on the land side, and it was overlooked by an independent hill. The best of troops could not have held such a fort, once the hill was occupied by troops, landed, as ours were, a little distance down the river bank. The European troops were sent against that fort, and the attack on Minelahn itself on the opposite bank, a little higher up, was confided to some two thousand men, of the Bengal and Madras Regiments. The fort at Minelahn was believed to be a worthless mud entrenchment, but it was a well-built structure in brick. To get at this fort the native regiments made a little detour inland and came upon the

House of the Lieutenant-Governor of the seven provinces on the Lower Irrawady and the bulk of the Minelah inhabitants camped around. No real resistance was expected on the Minelah side of the river ; but Minlakwa, the Lieutenant-Governor, had occupied his house and the gardens around with five hundred men, while the fort on the other side of the river was defended by three hundred. At least so the " Royal Hand "—for such was his title—declared ; but he seemed inclined to understate his force so as to furnish an excuse for his being so easily beaten. Some three hundred of his men were royal troops, the rest were his own levies on the spot. The Burmans, hidden behind trees and bushes, fired on the unsuspecting sepoys. The Madras scouts fell back on their supports by a movement which was unfairly attributed to want of steadiness. The attack was resumed ; the European officers raced for the stockades, on the further side of which they saw the Victoria Cross. They rushed up the high and narrow ramp, which was defended by a cannon. The piece was fired off over their heads, and in an instant they and some thirty or forty men entered the fort and shot down the Burmese. Panic-stricken, most of these fell on their knees and asked for mercy.

The Woon ran out at the further gate and escaped. Eighty Burmese were slain in the fort, and some hundreds remained prisoners. Several officers were severely wounded.

On the whole, however, the Burmese on the west bank fought well. The Minlakwa, a tough old fellow of sixty-two, was so grieved at the fall of his fort and the capture of his little town, that he contemplated suicide ; he, however, drew off as many men as he could and marched to Selin to the westward. Against him, a few days afterwards, Colonel Baker, of the 11th Bengal Native Infantry, led two hundred men of the Liverpool Regiment and 150 of the Bengalis with two mountain guns, and 150 coolies, who added to the apparent strength of his force. Minlakwa prepared to fight, but conceiving that the whole of Colonel Baker's men were combatants outnumbering his own, he demanded to parley. We learned afterwards that he had received a letter from Mandalay saying that the Hlootdaw was still in power, and that the Tyndah was in office, and telling him not to push matters to extremities, but to come to terms with the British. He offered to surrender his arms and material on condition that he was given eight days to try and pacify the country. These terms

were acceded to, and the arms were given up. The Burmese governor then courteously invited Colonel Baker and his officers to breakfast. Fourteen officers accepted, and were very hospitably entertained.

Twenty-four hours after we left Minelah, Minlakwa, the Royal Hand, came in a boat to the Thooreah, and sent in a telegram which he had received from Colonel Sladen, stating that his presence being required at Mandalay, "he would be allowed" to proceed to that city. So he was shipped on board the Thooreah, and we had the pleasure of interviewing that remarkable man. He was very conciliatory in his manner, and diplomatic and circumspect in his answers. But he was too seasoned in statecraft to be bashful or to affect reticence where it was not necessary. The capture of Minelah after such short resistance, Minlakwa confessed, was mortifying to him, and he thought of killing himself. But he excused the fiasco by saying that after all the men under him were mostly mere villagers; there were only a few of the King's troops.

Here he forgot that one-half his men were Royal troops, who were sent prisoners to Mandalay later on. Mr. Bernard saw these "regulars,"

on his way up the river, and offered to send them, free of charge, to Lower Burma to earn some money, reaping the harvest. They declared that they could not do the work, as they were not agricultural labourers. They were shopkeepers, writers, carpenters, tailors, and the like, who had been pressed by the King's orders to recruit the army. They wanted to get back to their homes. This statement was found to be correct when they were taken back to Mandalay.

The Royal troops were not, the Royal Hand admitted, equal to English soldiers; they were not as well armed and they were not properly trained to fight. It was not a war at all—it was merely a street row. The Burmans had not prepared for war; they never believed it would come. There was the ultimatum, it was true, but the Burmans did not know anything about an ultimatum. How could great questions be discussed and settled in five days? Such a thing was never heard of. Since there was to be negotiation, proper time would, of course, be given, but war at the end of five days! Why not at the end of one day? There was no idea of making war and fighting it out. The Kinwoon saw that nothing could be done by arms and imagined that the difficulties could

be settled by negotiation. And when the English army came, he advised the King to surrender everything and not to fight. He thought that the King would be then put back by the English, with some limitations of his power, no doubt, but he would still be left in his palace and on the throne. The Kinwoon soon saw that the King was taken at his word and sent off to India. The English will now keep the kingdom for themselves; when a man puts money into his pocket, why should he take it out and hand it back? It is less trouble to keep it for himself!

It seemed to me that this hard-headed and stern old gentleman, as he talked on in a sonorous voice with the peculiar intonation affected by Burmese accustomed to exercise rule, had a profound contempt for the statesmanship of the Kinwoon; and not much admiration for the fibreless King. Had a man of his own stamp filled the throne, probably the Kinwoon, and the Tyndah—of whose share in the business we shall hear more presently—would have thought it prudent to give their royal master advice pitched in a different key.

The title of the Royal Hand was conferred upon the Minlakwa by Theebaw's sagacious predecessor for the feat of striking a man—suspected of being

a rebel—dead, by a single blow of his open palm. The King expressed his approval, and said that the hand that struck such a blow should be held as his own—and the man of the big palm has since borne the style and title of the Royal Hand. The owner of the hand and title showed it to me; it was hard and horny, and of unusual size for an Oriental's.

Minlakwa had given to his late Majesty a much more remarkable example of the lengths to which he was prepared to go in vindicating the royal authority against evil-doers. One of his sons—he has still twenty sons and ten grandchildren living, his four wives having done their duty by him—a misguided son, having joined in a conspiracy to raise an insurrection, the Royal Hand smote with terrible swiftness. He arrested the delinquent, tried him on the spot, and sentenced him to death; and himself directed the execution. For this proof of unflinching loyalty and supreme energy, the King conferred on him a free pardon for all offences, committed or to come, so that he could never be executed, whatever crime he might commit, even against the King himself. The title, which carried with it this inestimable privilege, is *That-taw-shay* “Life-Royal-Long”—signifying that his life, by

Royal authority, shall be long, and shall never be shortened by the sword, or the club, of justice.

Like Hannibal, this warlike barbarian is blind of an eye, and his strong rugged face rather gains in impressiveness by the effect. He has his wits perfectly about him, and eagerly observed all that was going on. To my surprise he knew something about the functions of newspaper correspondents, and through the interpreter asked me whether I would confer the honour on him of mentioning his name, and what he had done, in my paper in Bombay. He professed to be much pleased at my readiness to comply, and said very graciously in his soldier-like resonant voice that he was happy in having met me.

As a proof of his prudence, it may be mentioned that he came a considerable distance up the river to board the steamer, instead of coming to Minelah, so that any malcontents about that neighbourhood might not be tempted to pay off old scores while he was naked in his adversity. He was always steady in putting down dacoity, and even under present circum-

stances has set himself against the practice. He will give his co-operation to the British, now that he sees nothing can be done successfully against them. But Mr. Phayre has succeeded to his seven provinces.

The "Royal Hand" being on his way to Mandalay, Mr. Robert Phayre—son of Sir Robert Phayre—the civil officer at Minelah, informed the Woons, or Governors, of the seven provinces on either side of the river, from Pagan to the frontier, that he was henceforth Chief Governor over them, and he directed them to address him officially as Ouk-Miplsin-Kayaine-Woon-Mingyee. To impress upon them the duty of obedience they were informed that the decree in question was "a royal order"—*amain-daw-thi-thee*, this instruction is royal. The Burmese are greatly afflicted and shocked by this phrase, which, in their language, should only be used by a man who is himself royal. It appears to them to imply that Mr. Phayre considers himself as far above the Woons or Governors, as a King is above mankind in general. The Burmese attach extraordinary importance to shades of expression ; a different set of pronouns has to be used according

as one addresses a stranger, or a member of the family, a senior, an equal, or a junior. This adds to the terrors which the language has for beginners.

When the war was impending, every householder in Minelah was called upon to pay a contribution of from five to ten rupees to the Government for an emergency. As trade was already at a standstill, and every one was on the brink of ruin, this addition to the public burdens left the inhabitants of Minelah and the other towns which were subjected to the exaction, without an anna. The regular tax is not heavy—Rs. 10 per house; men over sixty, and women without husbands, being exempted from any impost on the houses occupied by them. The houses in the villages along the river, and those in the interior also, are for the most part constructed of light matting, supported by a framework of bamboos. The flooring is carried on posts some four or five feet high, and the whole structure is very fragile, shaking under every step. But they are quite sufficient for the climate, and are neatly and often tastefully put together. In British Burma wood is frequently used instead of matting for the external walls, but in Upper Burma, though bricks

of a very inferior sort are sometimes seen, wood is apparently beyond the means of the average villager.

The house-tax appears to include a charge for the land that may be required for the purposes of the man who pays the tax; there is abundance of untilled land all around, of which but little use is made. From the point of view of the Burmese, it is labour, and not the land, which is to be considered of value. Until quite recently it was the labour of so many men which was given as a recompense to successful functionaries for exceptional services, and not assignments of land, which is so abundant in proportion to the numbers of the population, that it is scarcely more thought of than is the air by people in general. There is a quantity of land, however, which constitutes the royal domain, and is usually let out to cultivators who give a proportion of the crop by way of payment.

On Saturday, the 19th December, continuing our interminable way, we came in sight of the pagodas and temples of the once great and famous city of Pagan—a mighty capital as large probably in its day as London is now. London certainly can scarcely hope to leave such vast and stately piles to testify, five centuries after its

ruin, to the grandeur and extent of its prime. I counted eighty-four buildings, some of them stupendous, and still in a wonderful state of preservation; a bend in the river brought into view others which, if of less magnitude, were far more numerous. These masses of brickwork are held to be the greatest ever piled up by human industry; but certain structures beyond Mandalay, and others in Cambodia exceed them.

Pagan was probably a great capital centuries before the Christian era; when Marco Polo beheld its "towers of gold and silver," it was still a mighty city. It was in its glory in the eleventh and twelfth centuries; with its fall Burma entered on a period of anarchy and civil war, which was only ended by the rapid successes and extensive conquests of Alompra—Aloung-Pyah—the chief man of a little village in the north-east, who reorganised the country in the latter half of the last century. The dryness of the air has no doubt preserved so many of the buildings of Pagan, and enabled them to survive to our own day. Some of them have been kept in repair by the piety of kings, and other rich personages. This ancient city was but the successor to old Pagan, the remains of which are still to be discerned, and have their

place upon the map some miles farther to the north. The only inhabitants now in the less ancient Pagan are the slaves and outcasts who have charge of pagodas and temples; whose "King" lives in a sort of mock state. The degraded and unfortunate come there as to an Alsatia. Why edifices which are sacred should be entrusted to the care of men who are regarded as a polluted caste, is one of the mysteries of Buddhism.

Some six miles beyond Pagan, and on the opposite, the western, bank of the river, we came to a large village at which were stationed some 600 British troops. Four hundred of these were out on expeditions to intercept and disperse dacoits, of whom we hear more and more as we go northward. An officer, Captain Gayer, in command of a detachment of Madras N. I., which he led to Pagan from Ava, to look after the dacoits, came on board to return to Mandalay. His march had been difficult, for the force was provided with neither tents, nor guide, nor interpreter, nor a map, and the difficulty of getting through unknown and trackless jungle was considerable. Two men were taken, who were probably dacoits; there was no proof, so they were not shot—they were flogged with a navy cat-o'-

ninetails, old pattern. The order is to shoot all Burmans with arms, or engaged in pillage, but people only suspected are to be flogged, not shot. The distinction does not prevent the report from spreading that the troops shoot everybody, and that they are more dangerous to meet than the dacoits, who, if they get all a man has about him without a fight, will probably not think it necessary to kill him. In some cases villagers, who are not themselves out on dacoit duty, kindly send information to the officers at the river side stockades, when their neighbours are on the prowl around their habitations. •

CHAPTER VI.

THE SPREAD OF DACOITY.

Appearance of a Royal Pretender—Burmese Method of Suppressing Evidence—The Character of Theebaw—A Burmese Woman of Energy—A King regarded as Necessary for Religion—Cessation of Trade—Villagers take Refuge in Boats—Doubts as to the Future—A Chief Levying Men and Supplies—Military Incapacity of the Burmese—Occasional Courage—Muscular and Hardy.

It became certain in the week before Christmas that considerable bodies of men were going in the direction of Mandalay to join a Chief, a connection of the King's, who held command in the Royal army. Rumours were current of 7,000 men under his orders, and hundreds of men—700 in one body—are moving northwards, keeping well to the westward beyond the Chinwin river, so as to be out of reach of our detachments on the Irrawady.

We hear at every village where we stop that so many dacoits were killed by the villagers, or by the soldiers near by, the night before, and that at some other place the dacoits killed villagers. A

party of twelve soldiers under a havildar, with a number of coolies, marched from Mandalay southward, escorting telegraph men to repair the line where it was cut. Three hundred men came upon them, and they could only save themselves by flight, the material being a prize for the dacoits, if dacoits they indeed were. The three hundred were probably a band of the ex-King's troops. A house in a village at no great distance was attacked by a party, one of whom was shot through the body. His companions cut off his head and carried it away with them to prevent identification. In such matters the Burmese are very practical. The villagers exposed the headless trunk on a cross, and sent for the nearest officer, who came to the spot and made inquiries. So it is said in the villages around, that our troops crucify Burmans alive.

The truth is, these unlucky people are scared out of their lives by the dangers and sufferings to which they are a prey, and they are ready to believe the incredible. If the present state of things were to continue, Upper Burma would relapse into utter chaos. There seems to be a great deal to say for the opinion of a Rangoon merchant of long experience of Burma, that had the Tyndah and the Queen Supaya Lat been

deported, and Theebaw left in Mandalay, with Colonel Sladen or some other capable officer as guide, philosopher and friend, the present anarchy, threatening the ruin of the country, would never have arisen, and all the requisite ameliorations could have been effected without shock. The population is reduced to extremity by hunger and by fear ; the whole country is turning to dacoity, and where are the means of reorganising and reassuring it ? Theebaw is said by those who knew him to be by far the best of the Mandalay ruling clique. but his wife and his mother-in-law and his ministers did what they liked with him, deceived him by lies and put him in the way of evil. But kings, when contemptible, are without resource, whether they be villains or not.

On Sunday, the 20th December, we stopped at Pokoko, where there is a large and flourishing station of the Bombay and Burma Company. A number of brick-built houses, the property of Chinese traders, gives the little town a solid and prosperous look. Boats are being constructed, and there is quite a fleet of them around. The Woon is away, but in his absence his mother, widow of the late Woon, administers affairs. We visited her, and found her seated on

a chair in a house rented from a Chinaman, and giving audience to a number of people, who were crouching in the usual Burman fashion on mats on the floor. The chair on which the hostess sat of course raised her above the level of her Burmese visitors, denoting an assumption of superior rank, not a little remarkable in a Burmese lady. We, Europeans, were given chairs, and the "Wooness," smoking an immense cigarette, a foot long, talked very intelligently of the situation.

Dacoits, she said, covered the country around, and she had sent to ask for some English troops, and her request was granted. Firing was continually going on at night. Things were in a very bad way. What were the English going to do? They ought at least to leave "a nominal King" at Mandalay. A King was the head of the country, and religion could not do without one. A King was considered by the people as the head of religion, and represented God to their ideas. She did what she could to stop dacoity, but people had nothing to eat, and so they went about to loot. If there was a king at Mandalay they would listen to him and not rob other villagers. Being asked if there was a broker at Pokoko to arrange for the purchase of

some of the rice on board the steamer, she sent for a man of business : but he had fled from the place, and no one could be found to buy rice in the bag and re-sell it in small quantities. At another place, not far from Pokoko, a Chinaman landed two hundred and fifty bags, but found no intermediary to undertake the retail sale, every trader with any money having fled. The speculator, finding night coming on, with his rice on the bank, and dacoits expected, sincerely regretted having put himself in so precarious a position. He looked very disconsolate, and no one could give him any comfort. To make the matter worse, his gun had been taken from him by a civil officer down the river. What a night that unlucky Chinaman must have passed sitting on his rice bags on the river bank, the jungle in front, and the darkness peopled with phantom dacoits !

It is now pretty well recognised by all concerned that for this year at all events business in Upper Burma is impossible. The further we go the more we hear of dacoits, and the more we see of the prevailing apprehensions of the population. The only choice left them is that of dacoiting or being dacoited. The military posts dotted at long intervals along the banks of

the river make no pretence of controlling the country at large, or stopping the dacoity known to be in progress a little inland. The posts are stockaded, and seem to stand on the defensive. The number of troops available is so inadequate that it is impossible to do more than march out against any party of dacoits which may venture into villages in the immediate vicinity. The headmen of many of the villages have fled ; in some cases they have made war upon each other to settle questions of precedence, when the Woons or Governors have left, and have not been as yet replaced by men selected by the Hloodaw under the inspiration of the English administrators. In the barbarous Chin-win country most of the Woons have sought safety by flight, and the dacoits for the time being have it all their own way.

We are now (December 21st) within a few miles of Ava. Three large boats, laden with villagers, scared by dacoits, who have killed twenty persons in this neighbourhood, signal us, and the headman comes on board. He says there are five hundred men on the west of the river, and a hundred and fifty on the east, who loot all the villages. He had a battle with one set a week ago and killed a leader. He gave the names of other

leaders. Captain Gayer took down his statement, warning him to be careful in what he said :

“ If you tell me lies, I will shoot you !”

“ I am ready ; my life for a lie !” said the Burman, laughing at the officer’s vehemence, and he went on with his story. He told us that the whole country around was full of dacoits.

Two expeditions have been ordered to go to the wild country up the Chinwin valley ; and restore order, liberating the three employés of the Bombay-Burma Company, prisoners there in peril. The Chinwin is now so shallow that it is doubtful whether steamers can go up that river. The Chins are truculent savages, bearing a very evil reputation ; the Burmese administration in that region has collapsed. The present unpromising outlook generally is here again attributed to the sudden disappearance of the Burmese Government, without another being substituted for it. No Burman knows whether he is a Burmese subject or a British subject, and there is no one to whom he can safely look for orders or guidance. Hence the general disruption of this primitive society, threatening complete anarchy.

The movement even up here in the north is not yet apparently based on patriotic grounds ; it is not directed against the invaders ; it is a move-

ment of one village against the next, of one group of villages against another group. Mr. Callogreedy, of the Bombay-Burma Company, reported to Colonel Sladen from the disturbed Chinwin country that when the defeated Burmese troops fled north-westwards from the river when the expedition was nearing Mandalay, they pillaged the wayfarers and looted the villages they passed through. The Woons were powerless and fled; the villagers barricaded themselves, and a couple of confederacies were formed, the one under a man who assumed the right to a golden umbrella. He coalesced with the leader of the other section, and they had a band of 800 men, which marched round the country, forcing villagers to submit, and give men and arms and money on pain of being burnt and having the headmen killed. This band was looting the whole district. An expedition has been sent against it.

At Mingyan we found a British force under Colonel Harris. There were constant raids at night by well armed dacoits in bands of one hundred. Fortunately, they did not understand very well how to use the breech-loaders, but they fired at the sentries. Detachments of thirty grenadiers are sent against them; they shoot two or three, and the rest take to

flight. A few nights ago a villager came in and reported that a certain place was being looted; the soldiers were marched out and found nineteen bullock carts, just loaded with the loot of three villages. The dacoits had behaved with exceptional brutality, having, contrary to the custom of these raiders, outraged the women. It could not be said of these wretches that they were actuated by a desire to resist the invasion or strike a blow for the King. Probably they were professional criminals, mere robbers and ruffians. Seven of them were shot, and a number brought in as prisoners to be tried. The loot was recovered.

The two principal leaders of this band were Burmese policemen from the other side of the frontier. They had taken leave on urgent private affairs, and actually armed themselves with their regulation weapons to lead this foray! Our own home police leading one of the worst dacoity raids in the upper country! Some of the Naval Brigade men have been out after dacoits; they have shot prisoners in many cases, preferring to flog when the dacoity is clearly the result of want of food. Some of the men taken declared, and evidently with truth, that they had been themselves dacoited, and their villages destroyed,

and that they had to take what they could get from other villages to avoid starvation. We shall find that the Burmese declare that if a King be proclaimed, dacoity will cease in a few weeks, for then the people will know they have a government, and will be protected in their villages, and that things will go on as before. On the other hand, those Europeans who are in favour of annexation, and nearly every Anglo-Burman is in favour of that step, declare that annexation alone is the remedy.

Fortunately, the scare of famine seems to be unfounded. The new crop promises to be an excellent one, if the villagers would only give over dacoity and cut the paddy. But it is dangerous to get in the paddy, for it would attract dacoits. For the present there is a vicious circle ; there is dacoity because there is hunger, and no money and no trade ; and the prevalence of dacoity prevents the gathering in of the crops and the revival of trade. In ordinary times every Burman house is also a shop, where something or another is always on sale. This petty trade is now at an end.

Dacoiting is growing general, and it is not easy to cope with it, for the troops cannot come up with the bands, who can outmarch them with

ease. If these were cavalry it might be possible to overtake them, though the Madras troopers sent out from Mandalay had to return disappointed, the horses sinking to their girths in nullahs and finding it impossible to get through the dense jungle. It seems to be an open question whether the Burmese are poltroons or not. They make no pretence of standing up to European troops ; though as against the " black men," they assert an undoubted superiority, of which, however, they have given no proof. Except at Minelah, they never attempted to make good their boasting. Their army was very badly trained, if it could be said to be trained at all. The men were pressed ; their arms were bad ; their ammunition worse. The dahs—swords—served out to them were for the most part mere iron, which under the foot would bend double like pieces of hoop metal.

There seems to have been a singular lack of the military instinct in the successors of Alompra. The court sent men to be educated in the French military schools, who came back knowing how to construct forts on the modern system, and something of the theory of war. But there was no one to combine their information, or turn it to useful account. An instance may be seen

at Ava, some two hours below Mandalay. There the river is exceptionally broad and deep, and precisely at that spot it was intelligently determined to bar the river on a grand scale. Two forts on the modern system were erected, one on the west and the other on the east bank. These points being made strong, the bar should of course have been constructed in advance of them so as to be defended by their cross fire, the bar in its turn securing the forts against the too close contact of gunboats. But the inscrutable Burmese mind decided that the bar should be made a quarter of a mile higher up the river, so that the gunboats could get as near the forts as they liked, without let or hindrance, and having destroyed them might pass the undefended barrier at leisure. Two big steamers and at least fourteen large native craft were sunk in the full bosom of the majestic Irrawady, and the funnels and prows, standing high above the surface, gave the British tar full notice of the channels to be avoided. What is to be said of the military capacity of such people? Neither Theebaw, nor his ministers, nor his generals—except the Royal Hand at Minelah—showed the slightest spark of soldierly spirit. Had they handed over the national defence to the charge of a Commis-

sion of Burmese ladies it would have been more efficiently provided for ; under no circumstances could the fiasco have been more complete. Neither in the preliminary negotiations nor in trying to resist the consequences of the infatuation then shown was there a single act or thought worthy of rulers of men. But are the Burmese men ? The Burmese, on a cursory acquaintance, seem to be ingenious children, deficient in some of the qualities usually considered indispensable in grown-up people.

But in the opinion of men who have observed them impartially the Burmese are not to be set down as cowards. They fight with great energy and tenacity on occasions, and as dacoits they are formidable when they get their hands in. They are averse to discipline, which interferes with the realisation of the fundamental principle of Burman life, that the pursuit of happiness is every man's indefeasible right. He must have intervals of repose, of gossip, of the sweet-do-nothing. The Post Office authorities cannot depend upon Burmans for the postal service ; they deliver letters for a week, and then take a holiday and leave the delivery to a future opportunity. The inability to stand the restraints of discipline disqualifies the Burman for regular warfare ; but

for guerilla war he has special aptitudes. He is not afraid of death ; he is active and hardy ; and when excited by hope of immediate results, he is impetuous, and even intrepid. I am told by men who know the country that the inhabitants of the remoter villages, especially those in contact and frequent conflict with the hill tribes, are possessed of high courage ; but the dwellers in the towns have become effeminate, and are prone to use their legs rather than their arms in emergencies.

When we bear in mind that the Burmese are of the stock of the most warlike and terrible race that perhaps ever existed,—designated by their neighbours Mongs or Mongols, the Dauntless—because of their fierce daring, which carried them under Genghis Khan and Tamerlane over Asia, and brought Europe within their grasp—we cannot reasonably suppose that they are deficient in physical courage. If well-organised and well led, they would probably stand fire as well as the Chinese troops under improved European discipline are now found to do. The Chinese were usually set down as arrant cowards until changed conditions enabled them to show that they can fight good troops, and hold their own. The Burmese are strong-built athletic

men, and shew great dexterity and quickness in their ball playing, using the knees and elbows in a way that gives their muscles considerable development. With suitable training they ought to make good fighting men. This is the opinion of British officers who look forward to the time when a Burmese contingent will fight side by side with our native troops.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CITY OF MANDALAY.

Approach to the Capital—Unfortified Positions—Pegu Ponies—The City Walls—General Appearance Redeemed by the Religious Edifices—Objectionable Scavengers—Number of Houses—Population—The Royal Palace—The Stockades—The Hall of Audience—The Golden Umbrella and the Model—Royal Coffins of Gold—The Royal Prison Demolished—The King's Summer House and Gardens—The King's Artillery—The Supreme Council—The Great Campanile—Divine Service in the Throne Room—Finding Employment for the Poor—View from Mandalay Hill—Shan Dacoits close at Hand.

FROM Ava to Mandalay the river broadens and the banks grow more picturesque. The Shan hills are close at hand, to the eastward and the north. On the west bank, knolls, swelling occasionally to a height of some two or three hundred feet, and always crowned with pagodas of varying outline, would delight a landscape painter. At a great angle in the river, before the reach on which Mandalay is built is entered upon, nature has placed a couple of ideal hills, which, if fortified, would render the approach to the city by the river a work of great difficulty. But the notion of fortifying those lovely eminences never

entered into the Burmese mind. They support noble pagodas, which rise into the blue air, and are things of beauty, but they do not contribute to the safety of the national capital.

Mandalay itself can scarcely be seen by those who approach it from the river. The bank is some thirty feet higher than the river at its present level. The city proper, enclosed by walls, is about a mile and a half inland, and though the intervening space has been utilised, the houses are little better than huts, constructed of bamboos and matting. A wide roadway leads from the landing-place to the city, but it is not macadamised or cared for, and ruts and holes render the drive in a bullock cart precarious and unpleasant. Scarcely a horse is to be seen in the whole city, and the same may be said of all Burma. The climate is unfavourable to horses, and their place is supplied by the hardy little animals, coming principally from the Shan hills, which are known in India as Pegu ponies. They are very scarce, however, now in Upper Burma; they are dear, and of indifferent quality.

The city is surrounded by a high well-built brick wall forming a square, each side of which is one mile long. An earthen embankment,

nearly thirty feet broad, and twenty-two feet in height, supports the wall and gives access to its crenelated top. A deep and wide ditch in advance of the wall is crossed by wooden bridges. The fortification is that of Mongol cities of the middle ages, and takes no note whatever of the necessities of modern defence. Twelve gates, three on each side, give admittance, and the streets are laid out from gate to gate, parallel to the walls. The roadways are eighty feet wide, and trees are planted along the sides, a little too close to the line of the houses. When they are macadamised they will make fine streets. The houses are for the most part constructed of teak or of bamboo. They are very frail and ephemeral.

The religious edifices, monasteries for the most part, are well designed, covered with curious carving, and architecturally effective. They redeem the general aspect of the city from meanness. Under the old régime the scavenging was given up wholly to the care of a ferocious looking breed of black pigs, and packs of quarrelsome dogs, who performed their task indifferently well, but were themselves an intolerable nuisance. Mr. Bernard, the Chief Commissioner, has organised, amongst the unemployed coolies,

gangs of sweepers, and of road-makers, who are effecting already a considerable improvement. The pigs and dogs are gradually disappearing from the main thoroughfares. A new roadway has also been commenced to give employment to starving men and women who might have been driven by hunger to join the dacoits. The main streets will be metalled. The number of houses is estimated at 12,000, and the population at 100,000, a large proportion of whom were supported by the palace, either by largesses or by employment. It is said that 20,000 were dependent for subsistence on the Court.

The Royal Palace occupies the centre of the city, and is enclosed by a strong teak stockade, twenty feet in height, and by two brick walls, the first a hundred feet inside the stockade, and the second two hundred feet, all three being, like the city walls, in straight lines, as if the purpose was to minimise the difficulties in the way of an assailant. The British military authorities have lost no time in cutting through the long lines at intervals, and erecting block houses which will command the front of the stockade. The eastern gate was reserved for the King, but now it is thrown open. Looking towards the Pavilion of Au-

dience from this gate, the royal throne, raised on a dais, is seen amidst the gilded pillars and under the canopied roof. This Hall of Audience is the finest structure of all that go to make up the totality of the palace. A beautiful pinnacle of wonderful lightness and grace surmounts it. Corrugated iron has been turned to ornamental use in filling in the light timber framework which soars up to bear the resplendent golden umbrelia that crowns the whole. The fluting of the corrugated iron harmonises very successfully with the bold and aspiring lines of the structure. Iron wire ropes of great tenuity run from the ground to the slender spire, and give it a certain amount of support; they, too, harmonise with the general flow of the lines upwards and seem to be a necessary and artistic detail of the general design. The golden umbrella was viewed with covetous eyes by the Prize Committee; if made of solid gold, it would pay handsomely for the trouble of getting it down. But there is a belief, which is possibly well founded, that the golden umbrella, which was constructed for the Pavilion of Audience and shown to King Mindo-Min and the Court, was not put up, the model, which had been made in gilt metal, being quietly substituted, no one being much the wiser. It is

whispered that certain royal coffins, occupying the coquettish little tombs seen at intervals amongst the other gilt and carved buildings inside the royal precincts, are of gold. But the Prize Committee would not dream of rifling tombs even for gold coffins; and to prevent unauthorised desecration, effectual precautions have been taken.

The Palace consists of a series of pavilions and other buildings, differing in size and detail, but all composed of teak, elaborately carved, and painted red when not covered with gilding. The application of gold is on so liberal a scale that the eye gets tired of it, and the Indian red of the bases of the pillars is a welcome relief. The ingenuity of the designer and the skill of the workmen give variety and interest to every varying detail. There is no monotony, and no straining after the grandiose. Some of the buildings, if reproduced in gold and silver work, would make exquisite caskets for the boudoir of a queen. The prison in which the survivors of the massacres were confined was a wooden structure, painted red, close to other buildings from which it shut out the breeze. Partly on this account, and partly because of the sinister associations of the place, the present

occupiers of the Palace have caused the prison house to be rased to the ground, and it now exists only in the memory of the ranees and princesses who were so long immured in it.

The King's Summer House, in which Theebaw used to spend the evenings and the nights in the hot weather, is a bright little kiosk of silver and looking-glass, in a small ornamental piece of water surrounded by a large number of alcoves. In each of these latter was a highly decorated couch intended for the Phoongyes, who visited His Majesty and received largesses at his hands. In each alcove was a handsome glass chandelier. A roystering company of Madras Sappers rushed round, and smashed every lamp, for the enjoyment of seeing the showers of glass fall to the ground. This seems to have been the worst if not the only act of wanton destruction committed within the precincts of the palace. The remoteness of the enclosure around the summer pavilion enabled the mischief-makers to commit this act of vandalism. The royal gardens have enjoyed a great reputation, but they appear to have been much neglected of late. Winding walks, the rockeries, little lakes, and a gilded bridge, with a small canal and a pleasure boat, form its chief features.

The restricted area available within the palace enclosure rendered it impossible to make a garden of any size. When I first visited the palace, the most conspicuous objects were perhaps two highly-gilt cannon, with their carriages, flanking the entrance to the pavilion of audience. A number of smaller gilded guns and carriages were in an adjacent part of the grounds. These were removed and put on board the transport *Aloung Pyah* and sent to Rangoon. They will doubtless ornament the *Maidan* at Calcutta. Besides these resplendent cannon, which were obviously meant for show, there were several guns carefully mounted on elaborately contrived platforms enabling them to point in any direction. The singular thing was that their muzzles, wherever they pointed, were within a few feet of the palace walls around, so that unless to clear out the Royal apartments and bring down the palace, they were absolutely useless. In the Arsenal, which was included, like the Mint, amongst the appurtenances of the palace, there was a considerable number of Remington and Martini-Henry rifles. The latter were of Burmese manufacture, and were very well made. Had the Burmese been able to obtain English gunpowder, these weapons

would have been as formidable as our own. But the Burmese gunpowder is deficient in energy, being afflicted with a curious apathy, which delays its explosion. I have seen a lighted match thrown on a plate filled with Burmese powder, and it only blew up after some of the grains had ignited. A quantity of the dahs, laid down by the King's soldiers who were disarmed on the surrender of Mandalay, were found to be made of soft iron which bent double under moderate pressure. Many of the scabbards were made of tin. The war department of Burma was as incapable as that of foreign affairs.

The Palace was the centre of the city life, as well as of the Burmese administrative system. The Hlootdaw or Supreme Council assembles in a building contiguous to the Hall of Audience, but just outside the inner of the three walls enclosing the palace and grounds. Like the Audience Hall it is open in front and at the side, the members of the Council sitting virtually in the open air, and under the public eye. They sit there still *coram populo*, each of them wearing a white fillet around the head, much as Cæsar wore his laurels. It was in the midst of his colleagues in this Council Hall that the Tyndah was sum-

moned to receive from the Chief Commissioner the information that he was to be simultaneously removed from the Government and deported from the capital under the circumstances which I shall presently relate.

Some thirty or forty yards from the Council House a tall campanile stands isolated, bearing a water-clock, and what is of more importance, a great bell on which the four watches of the day are beaten, giving the time to the city. The cessation of the booming of this bell is always taken to signify that the government machinery has given way, and general consternation takes the place of Burmese confidence in the political situation. On the day of the surrender of Theebaw, the bell-ringers disappeared, and the ominous silence added greatly to the terrors of the situation, and contributed to the disorders which ensued during the night. It was the first care of Colonel Sladen on reconstructing the Hloot-daw to cause the bell to be sounded, and the moral effect was very marked; the citizens understood that the Government had been set going again, and the shops were re-opened and business resumed. The official bell-ringers for a few days performed the traditional prostrations towards the palace on descending from the cam-

panile ; but then probably thinking that neither Mr. Bernard nor Colonel Sladen, who were now the chief occupants of the august building, cared much for that mark of homage, they omitted the prostrations, and treated the ringing of the bell as a mere matter of business.

On Christmas morning I was present when divine service was performed in the Hall of Audience for the soldiers by the Reverend Mr. Beattie. The chaplain stood in front of the throne, the militant congregation facing him. The sun streamed into the pavilion, and lighted up the gilded pillars, and the empty throne. The scene was brilliant and suggestive. The words " Give peace in our time, O Lord ! " rang out with a strange dramatic effect in the midst of such surroundings.

The roads within the Palace precincts are broad and well kept ; Mr. Bernard has improvised a public works department to make and metal roads in Mandalay, with a view to the employment of the starving people. No time has been lost ; roads are being already widened and levelled, and between two and three thousand men and women are in receipt of four annas a day. They are employed on piece work, as when paid by the day they did only one anna's worth of

work. The industrious, women mainly, earn six and even eight annas a day. They are paid every evening, not having anything else to live upon. If the earthwork of the Mandalay-Toungoo railway, which is in contemplation, be put in hand, and the villagers given employment on it, there will be a great diminution in the number of dacoits. There is something like a complete cessation of dacoiting now in the city ; the couple of dacoits shot in the mornings or the half-dozen flogged, have, as a rule, been given over by the villagers to the military. Dacoity prevails in the surrounding plain, and at times there are regular engagements during the night, the villagers defending themselves, or attacking their neighbours, with more or less success. .

The Chief Commissioner, who is ubiquitous, invited me to join him in the ascent of the picturesque Mandalay Hill, which stands in a commanding position to the north of the city. The 'heliograph station was at work on the summit, keeping up communication with military posts at considerable distances. Some fine pagodas complete the hill, and in one fane there is a colossal statue of Buddha, some forty feet high, which is remarkable as having, contrary to usage, the arm extended as if in expos-

tulation or command. From the summit of the hill there is a magnificent panoramic view, the great river swelling here into a lake and shut in by islands, the wooded hills on both banks dipping in some places almost into the water. A large earthen embankment to the northward protects the city from inundation when the river overflows. The sun setting above the low western hills on the opposite side of the river, sets the sky in a glow of gold and crimson which is reflected upon the river, and the city, and the pinnacles of the palace. The plain is narrowed to the eastward by the gray and inhospitable Shan mountains, which extend east and north towards Tongking and China. The narrow and tortuous valleys of the Sittang and the Salween pierce this great mountain region from the south-east, but from the Mandalay side it is practically inaccessible. The military guard in charge of the heliograph tell us that every night there is firing in the villages, dacoity being prevalent.

It will turn out in a day or two that the Shans are answerable for a good deal of this firing. They are already said to be joining the dacoits, and this statement, though doubted at the time, was verified a few days later when a

body of some hundreds of dacoits came into collision with our troops at Amarapura, some five or six miles distant from Mandalay. The Shans, a stubborn remnant of the aboriginal race which occupied China when the present Chinese pressed southward from the north, have the reputation of being formidable in mountain warfare. When it is found that they are in movement towards the city, a feeling of consternation will put an end to all business. They create more alarm than did the arrival of our soldiers from Lower Burma.

Hopes are entertained that the Shan Chiefs, who had thrown off their allegiance to King Theebaw, may be brought to see that their interests are not in any way compromised by the establishment of British authority at Mandalay. It may be difficult, however, to get them to take our view of the matter, if we seek the resumption of the payment of the tribute which was paid by the Shans to Theebaw's predecessor. But the hope of getting revenue from the Shans is already being given up. We may obtain their friendship by dextrous diplomacy, but not their tribute, unless we first fight for it.

CHAPTER VIII.

BUDDHISM IN BURMA.

The Multitude of Religious Buildings—Waste of the National Resources—The Incomparable—Magnificent Hall—The Royal Merit—Visit to the Ruler of Religion—The Number of his Clergy—His Parable respecting King Theebaw—His Opinion of the Tyndah and of the English Administration—King Theebaw's Body Linen.

THERE are two great religious edifices in Mandalay, which it is the duty, as it is the pleasure, of the traveller to see. The city, like all Burma, teems with pagodas and monasteries. From end to end of the country every hill-top, every plain, every grove of trees, every garden, has its graceful building, in white or gold, giving evidence of the piety and of the lavishness of their innumerable founders. The amount of money thus expended during centuries, and now still lavished year by year and month by month, is past the counting of all the clerks in the Bank of England. The roads, the palaces, the

fortifications, the aqueducts, that might have been built with all this brick and mortar, to say nothing of the stucco, covered with gold-leaf sometimes an inch thick ! A chance fire burnt down one great pagoda, and the gold melted from its immense surface was estimated at £600,000 sterling. It had been deposited in successive layers by generations of the faithful. The molten gold, a king's ransom, was replaced by Theebaw, and more of the precious metal added. This statement is given on Burmese authority.

Such enormous waste of the national resources, persevered in through generations, may in part account for the poverty of the population, which lives for the most part in habitations of wicker-work, eked out with matting. There is no accumulation of property ; every family lives an ephemeral life ; those that come after will live the same. The palace in Mandalay is composed of planks, carved, and gilt profusely indeed ; but there is not a wall of brick or stone to give consistence or permanence to a single wing of it. Three or four miles away on the other side of the broad-bosomed river the plinth of a pagoda was built by Mindo-Min with such an extravagant waste of solid material that, even as it stands, it is said to be the greatest mass of

brickwork in the world. An earthquake—nothing else would suffice—rent it, and the pagoda was never completed. But there the plinth, in its mass, remains, and will remain till the end of time, for it would be sacrilege to remove, or meddle with it.

This was only one of the vast religious structures which marked that monarch's reign. In Mandalay itself he erected a monastery—the "Like-of-Which-There-is-Not" the great Incomparable—which possesses a beautiful hall, unquestionably the finest in all Mandalay. It would be no great stretch of truth to say that it is the finest in the world. The building is composed of a series of bold terraces, seven in number, rising one above another, the central one being the highest. The golden hall is carried on thirty-six pillars, some of which are seventy feet high, the ceiling reaching its greatest elevation in the high central terrace. And there a colossal figure of Gautama—sits, meditating beside a golden throne intended for the King. The boldness of the general design, the noble proportions of the immense hall, and the great height of the golden roof soaring over the throne and the statue fill the mind with surprise and pleasure. Pillars, walls, and roof are richly gilt, glass inlaying heightening the brilliancy.

When the Viceroy comes to Mandalay to promulgate the decree which announces the future organization of Burma, the ceremonial will probably be held in this noblest of throne rooms. The Chief Commissioner has shown his appreciation of the beautiful in prescribing the grand Hall of the Incomparable as the scene of the ceremonial, if circumstances permit of its being held.

Externally, this royal building is plain in design and material. The walls are white stucco, and severely unadorned. But the mass, bathed in the bright sunlight, is imposing in its simplicity.

Not far from the Incomparable is a pagoda of great size, and perfect symmetry, covered with gilding, and towering above four hundred and sixty-four little chapels—if such they may be called—each containing a large tablet of white marble, on which is inscribed a portion of the sacred Buddhist books. Thus the whole of the law, cut deep in marble, is displayed to the eyes of the inquirer. This pagoda, with its surrounding buildings, must have cost a hundred and fifty thousand pounds. It bears the title of The Royal Merit—significant of the belief indulged in by Mindo-Min that in building this great religious edifice, with its instructive surroundings, he had earned for himself the great reward, when

his time should come, to reign among the Spirits, for Burmese Kings do not "die," like ordinary mortals. He felt that he would merit Nirvana itself, and be exonerated from the sin and suffering of Existence.

King Theebaw, I hear, was engaged in constructing a magnificent building, to cost twenty-three lakhs, at some distance from Mandalay ; a structure so vast as to establish his royal merit beyond all doubt or cavil. But it will never be finished, for no Buddhist ever finishes a religious structure begun by another. The royal merit of Theebaw will for ever remain in doubt.

The Rev. J. C. Colbeck, a Burmese scholar of high attainments, who was a missionary in Mandalay at the time of the massacres, and the Rev. Mr. Beattie, Chaplain of the Field Force, and myself, after seeing the Incomparable and the Royal Merit, proceeded to a famous Kyoung or monastery, where the Ruler of Religion—the Buddhist Archbishop—resides with a number of phoongyes of great sanctity. The gate was open, and we entered the enclosure without let or hindrance. Some youths wearing the yellow robe of the religious life were in the courtyard, and smilingly welcomed us ; but when they were asked to take our names or cards to the

Ruler of Religion they excused themselves, almost with alarm, saying that they dared not go in and speak to him. Extraordinary respect is shown by all classes of Burmese towards monks of known sanctity; way is made for them in the streets, and they are never approached without prostrations. When they die, they are embalmed, and the bodies are gilded, so that they look like golden statues; they are consigned to costly coffins, elaborately carved, and placed in holy ground. We must approach these men, the depositories of the truths of Buddha, with reverence; we must not expect boys to bounce in and tell them that strangers are coming.

We entered an inner court, and there, seated on a little platform of bamboo, placed in the hot sun, the venerable religious sat, with his yellow cloak thrown off his broad shoulders, so that he could enjoy the warmth of the sun's rays. About a dozen phoongyes were seated on the ground at a little distance, conversing with him. We introduced ourselves, handing, in lieu of letters of recommendation, our cards, which he took with perplexity, asking what he was to do with them. We informed him that it was the European custom to give cards with the names of visitors, and we then went through a brief re-

capitulation of our names, professions, and made it clear that our purposes in Mandalay were friendly. The good old man was very self-possessed, but at first was manifestly on his guard and spoke with great circumspection. Presently he took confidence, and feeling sure of our good intentions, and our kindly disposition towards him, became communicative and interesting. Mr. Colbeck was the interpreter, his acquaintance with the niceties of Burmese terms of expression standing him and us in good stead.

The Ruler of Religion, in answer to questions, propounded chiefly by Mr. Beattie, stated that he had been a phoongye for forty-seven years, and that he was sixty-two years old. He had under his jurisdiction twenty-seven monasteries, and seventy or eighty bishops. He used to have twelve thousand phoongyes, but that was so no longer. Their supporters, who used to give them food, now, on account of the troubles, could not continue to do so, and many phoongyes were obliged to return to their parents and their villages to get the means of living. They retained their dress, but they had to leave the monasteries and live where they could. King Theebaw used not to come to visit him, he said ; but he went

often to see the King. It was his duty to admonish the King, and to urge him to make a humane use of the kingly power; and he did so. He was not appointed to his present position by King Theebaw, but by King Mindo-Min, who now "reigns among the spirits." He was appointed when the previous Ruler of Religion "returned to the Essence." He carefully distinguished between these phrases, the one being regarded as respectful in speaking of the death of a king, and the other the accepted form when intimating the death of a religious. He was not, he modestly informed us, chosen for his wisdom, but by the favour of the King. He had been the King's old teacher. Asked if he had heard of the Theosophists, or knew Colonel Olcott, the Ruler of Religion said he knew nothing of them, but one of the phoongyics stated that he had heard of Olcott, and Mr. Beattie mentioned that he had seen "Isis Unveiled" and Theosophical pamphlets amongst King Theebaw's books in the palace. But none of these pious men had heard of Madame Blavatzki or her great work.

The Venerable Ruler was then diplomatically sounded in regard to matters political, but he was cautious and deliberate to a degree. He

would not commit himself to an opinion, or at least he avoided committing himself in express terms. But it was easy to divine his real views. He said that he did not know who would now reign. But whoever the prince might be, if he protected religion, and gave comfort and security to the people, he would be a good ruler. King Theebaw was favourable to religion, and kindly to the phoongyes, but he was inexperienced; he was young, and knew little of public affairs. The Ruler of Religion, when asked the question with a directness which somewhat disconcerted him for a moment, said that he was not very sorry, that Theebaw was gone; was not the case that of parents who have lost their children? "A father and a mother have children whom they love; but the children get the Ninety-Six Sicknesses to which the human race is subject. The parents do all they can to restore the children to health, but nothing avails; in spite of all that can be done, they depart. The parents must not be disturbed in mind for what happens; they must remain satisfied with the result, having done their best. So it is with King Theebaw."

This parable doubtless expresses the Ruler of Religion's wise acquiescence in the irrevocable. Asked whether the Tyndah's deportation was

to be approved; and whether it was true that the War Minister was the principal actor in the massacres, the wise old man, after a moment's deliberation, said:—"We live here in this Kyoung, and not in the world; we do not know what occurs in the palace; sometimes we are told one thing and sometimes another; we cannot be sure that it is true. The Tyndah was one of the ministers; whether he or another was responsible, we cannot know."

This skilful statement was audibly approved by the watchful phoongyes present, one of whom, whispered to the reverend man next him—"That is the best answer to give!" And perhaps it was, for the Tyndah is credited with a long arm, and a heavy hand.

With respect to the English occupation the devout old man would say but little, but that little was frankly said. The English ministers (Mr. Bernard and Colonel Sladen) acted, he said, very well. Mr. Bernard came and paid him a visit. With the soldiers there was a fault to be found; he heard complaints, especially from the districts, that they oppressed the people, and were guilty of bad conduct to women. He intended to bring these complaints to the notice of Mr. Bernard, but he had not heard of them

when the Chief Commissioner visited him. Soldiers were quartered in some of the monasteries ; he supposed that it was necessary at present, but they damaged and defaced the buildings.

A book composed of separate leaves on which were written, in square-headed Pali character, the rules of the law, was shown us ; one volume was presented to Mr. Beattie, and I obtained a couple of precious leaves. It was explained to us that the leaves were made of the body linen of the King, which was too sacred to be turned to any profane use ; it was lacquered until the linen was covered up from mortal eyes, and then covered with sacred letters in gold and black.

One of the holy monks in attendance on the Ruler of Religion, Oo-Nay-Mein by name, hearing that I was from Bombay, pressed me earnestly to take him to that great city, which he knew evidently by reputation. When I told him that there was not a single pagoda or Buddhist monastery in all Bombay, he seemed much disappointed ; that city has, I am afraid, suffered from my frankness in the estimation of these pious souls. Another monk, who saw us to the gate, committed what, I am afraid, was a great

sin, which will entail serious complications in a future existence ; he asked Mr. Beattie for his watch and chain, and with smiling persistence pressed his request. A Buddhist monk is strictly forbidden to ask even for a handful of rice, or to look for it ; he may hold out his bowl, but he must cast down his eyes. To ask, and press for, a watch and chain must, therefore, be a serious fall from righteousness, showing an undue desire for the worthless things of this vain existence. Mr. Beattie not desiring to be a party to sin, excused himself from compliance, by alleging that he had only one watch, and he was sorry that he could not dispense with it. But I am really ashamed to record this little peccadillo. There is good Christian authority for the belief that the phoongyes are a very self-denying and charitable class of men.

CHAPTER IX.

THE EDUCATIONAL INFLUENCE
OF BUDDHISM.

Education in the Hands of the Priesthood—The Sacred Pali—Buddhism a Scheme of Morality—Marco Polo's Opinion of Buddhism—Monks and Nuns in Lower Burma—The Missionaries a Higher Education—Disintegration—Abstention of the Monks from Politics—Influence of Buddhism for Good—Buddhism the Established Religion in Upper Burma—Alompra—Burman Cruelty in War.

IN Upper Burma education is entirely in the hands of the Buddhist priesthood, and is religious not only in principle but in detail. Boys, as soon as they are six or seven years of age, go daily to the monasteries, or they are sent there to live. They are instructed in the Buddhist literature, and are taught to read and write. Every Buddhist must himself become a monk if only for twenty-four hours if his merits are to count when the balance of good and evil of the

present existence has to be struck. If religious life be chosen the course of instructions includes Pali, which is the sacred tongue. Of this language the Brahmins say that it is the daughter of Sanscrit as the milk comes from the holy cow ; but as milk is polluted when carried in a dog-skin, so Pali has been defiled by conveying the heresies of Buddhism. The monks or phoongyes are the school-masters and the instructors of the people, and they are regarded with veneration. All of them know how to repeat by heart passages of the Pali scriptures, but it is doubtful whether many of them really know the meaning of the words they recite with so much solemnity. They make no pretence at secular teaching ; their one aim is to instil religious principles and maxims into the minds of their pupils, and in this they attain an amount of success far beyond that of any other priesthood. It is the opinion of those who know the Burmese and their ways of thought that they are far more penetrated by the influences of Buddhism than are the Muhomedans by the teachings of Islam or the Europeans as a whole by those of Christianity. The instruction which is given to the Buddhist in his earliest years is followed up in after-life by the habitual reading of the scriptures on festival days, on

occasions of public rejoicing, and at the time of deaths of relatives. It is their practice, and their delight, to read the scriptures and discuss points of doctrine.

Buddhism is a carefully elaborated scheme of high morality based on a philosophy of life in which a deity has no part. The balance of the merits and demerits of each individual will, by a sort of self-acting process, regulate his future. If an Englishman be mild in temper and gentle and considerate in his manners, he will be a Buddhist and a Burmese in the next life. If any one commits a grievous sin, for instance, gets his living by killing fish to sell in the market, he will have to spend some millions of years in purgatorial fires, and will then be born a dog or a cat, or perhaps something even more unlike a learned Buddhist and enlightened Burman. It was the opinion of General Fytche that the practical result of this teaching is that the Buddhists do good, not for its own sake, but in the hope of reward. So much goodness, in this transient existence, so much happiness hereafter. But this is a somewhat captious view. Marco Polo declared that the Buddhist religion was so good that if God had made it, it would be the best of all. It is under the influ-

ence of that religion that the Burmese mind and character have been moulded during the course of centuries. But the Mongol is a somewhat intractable material to work upon, and the Burman is still a Mongol, when Buddhism has said its permitted say.

When the British expedition was already on its way to Mandalay to depose Theebaw, the Buddhist Archbishop of the Lower country was received with every evidence of deference by Mr. Bernard. He was assured that in any event Buddhism should remain the national religion of Upper Burma, and that it would be protected and honoured by the Government. "Since that is your determination," said the Ruler of Religion, "the success of the British policy is assured."

In Lower Burma there is no doubt that the Buddhist church has fallen upon evil days. There is no province where religion is more powerful. The education is mainly religious; the people like the monks as schoolmasters, and the nuns as teachers of the little girls. The Christian missionaries of all denomination have created the higher education, such as it is. The Bishop of Rangoon heads the endowment movement. Even the English and Burmese ladies join in

these matters, and not a few in Rangoon society can argue the relative merits of Christianity and Buddhism with skill and acuteness. The literature according to the official report was mainly religious during the past year. It included no publications, we are told, under the heads of arts, fiction, politics, or philosophy; and the sole work on law was an index to statutes. There were eight books of poetry which the official writer dismisses with the remark that they "were as usual chiefly religious or amatory in their character." The secular schools of the Government and the higher education of the Christian missionaries militate against the Buddhist teaching. The Government has refused to recognise the Buddhist ecclesiastical code by which order and uniformity could alone be maintained in the monasteries, and amongst the priesthood. Abuses have sprung up which cannot be checked, and there is a marked tendency to disintegration. As might be expected, the force of the religious influence has been considerably diminished. Young Burma takes kindly to drink and to opium, our excise and opium laws providing the means of indulging in those demoralising enjoyments. Worse than all, the secular schools are found to be most

effective in teaching how to qualify for Government employment and for clerkships in merchants' offices. The Christian missionaries do not regret the disintegration of Buddhism, which they see in progress in Lower Burma, for they believe that Buddhism, while it exists in its pristine strength, is an insuperable obstacle to the spread of Christianity. Many of them, however, respect the good side of Buddhism, and acknowledge the spiritual supremacy enjoyed by the Buddhist priesthood. Dr. Bigandet, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Rangoon, who has become eminent as an authority on Burman civilisation, testifies to the influence in many respects exercised for good, which is possessed by the Buddhist church. The French Bishop says, he never read, or heard, that the Buddhist monks as a body interfered in affairs of State. They seem to remain equally indifferent to family or domestic affairs. The regulations they are subjected to, and the object which they have in view in entering the religious profession, debar them from concerning themselves in affairs that are foreign to their sacred calling. In a religious point of view their influence is a mighty one. Upon their order, hinges the whole fabric of Buddhism. From it, as from a source, flows the

life that maintains and invigorates religious belief in the masses that profess that creed.

• We may view the members of the priestly order as religious, and as instructors of the people at large, and principally of youth. In that double capacity they exercise a great control and retain a strong hold over the minds of the people. They stand in bold relief over the society they belong to. Their dress, their mode of life, their voluntary denial of all gratification of sensual appetites, centre upon them the admiring eyes of all. They are looked upon as the imitators and followers of Buddha ; they hold up to ordinary believers the example of that perfection they have been taught so fondly to revere. The Phoongyes are living monuments of piety, reminding the people of all that is most sacred and perfect in practical religion. A religious body bound together in a great community, but in constant touch with the outer world, must be a powerful agency fostering religious feelings in the mind of a half-civilised people, as the Burmese are. The Phoongyes command the respect and veneration of the people, and exercise a considerable amount of religious influence over the masses. The Bishop attributes the influence possessed by the priesthood to their labours in the religious instruction of the young,

and their more direct and active work in bringing Buddhist principles to bear upon the people. They popularise and nourish religious ideals, and have as their reward in this world the loving reverence of the population at large.

This testimony is calculated to make one pause before regarding with unqualified satisfaction the destructive process which is in progress amongst the Burmese of Lower Burma. The reassuring statement which Mr Bernard made at a critical moment to the Buddhist Archbishop in Rangoon may be taken to imply that the ecclesiastical code will be recognised in Upper Burma, so that the discipline and unity of the numerous priesthood of that country may be maintained by the heads of the community. It will require some nerve and firmness on the part of the Government to carry out a policy which will in effect make Buddhism the established church of Upper Burma. But unless some measure of the kind be taken, religious anarchy may be looked for. The monarchs of the house of Alompra were defenders and supporters of the faith, and had come to be regarded as the secular heads of Burmese Buddhism. Now the King has been sent out of the country, we hear at every turn that a "nominal king" at least is necessary for religion, which means

that whatever arrangement in regard to foreign affairs and the like the English may choose to insist upon is of secondary importance as compared with the secular headship of the religion. If a protected prince be not set up, it will probably be found indispensable to give official recognition to the status and powers of the Ruler of Religion and his Synod at Mandalay, for a purely British administration will have no other bond of social unity to replace that which has disappeared with the Alompra dynasty. It will take some years to procure for a Chief Commissioner, or even for a Lieutenant-Governor, that "superstitious veneration" which, to Colonel Sladen's scorn, the Burmese wasted on King Theebaw and his house.

Buddhism has a right to boast that it is pre-eminently the religion of peace. It is claimed for it that during the two thousand five hundred years which have passed under this dispensation, it has never proselytized by the sword, and though often persecuted, has never made reprisals upon its persecutors. Its tenets and teachings are accepted by five hundred millions of the human race, a number exceeding that of Christians and Mussulmans combined. We may do well to give a kindly ear to the words of

affection in which those whom this great faith has consoled, magnify its claims on human gratitude. Never has the coat of mail covered the yellow robe of the monk, nor his voice been heard in the clamour of battle. That may be approximately true ; but it is difficult to believe the corollary that as Buddhism is the true and the best religion, so the Burman is by far the noblest son of man yet born. Let us brace ourselves to endure with patience this generous vaunting, and consider whether there is any justification for similar boasting to which our ears are more attuned.

The ineffable consciousness of religious, moral, and ethnical superiority, which the undoubting Burman imbibes with his mother's milk, has helped him to acquire the supremacy which he has achieved amongst the races who preceded him in the possession of the Indo-Chinese Chersonesus. The practical politicians, the builders up of empire, did not, indeed, disdain the use of very practical maxims which contributed considerably to the results achieved. Alompra, who was in the middle of the last century the headman of a village in the Monshobo country, hewed his way to power, by incessant fighting along strategical lines, which were selected with a sagacity

that showed him to be possessed of high military genius. But his fighting was supplemented by judicious massacres that ignored the sublime teachings of Buddhist philosophy. The fierce and merciless temperament of the founder of the dynasty leavened the blood of many of his descendants. If Theebaw be the victim of appearances, and was really guiltless of the massacres effected for the consolidation of his throne, the undaunted metal of Supaya Lat shows that the spirit of Alompra survived him to our own times.

Burmese statesmen recognised the theory* that cruelty is a force, long before it was formulated in words by Western thinkers. During the negotiations which preceded the rupture and the war with the Government of India sixty years ago, the English representative was informed, for his own information, and for that of all concerned, that although the Burmans, when at peace and undisturbed, were a quiet and companionable people, who followed custom and obeyed the law, they were very terrible indeed against enemies who provoked them. Their whole aspect then changed, and they slew the wicked without mercy, and sawed up traitors fastened between planks. This was

not a vain boast. During the war they took some prisoners in the invasion of one of the frontier provinces of India. The prisoners were laden like beasts of burden with the booty, taken from their villages, and women with children at the breast being unable to carry their proper share of the plunder, were deprived of their children, whose heads were cut off, and thrown into the river. Then the mothers could carry the bundles. The doctrines of Buddha never induced the statecraft of Burma to tolerate the execrable rose-water policy, which vexed the soul of Thomas Carlyle.

Nevertheless it must be said for the Burmese that they have on the whole earned the reputation of being a very kindly, affable, and hospitable race. They are honest and truthful. They generally mean what they say, when they say it, but they are impressionable, and readily change their points of view, when they forget the obligation of a promise. The cooly, even when paid a rupee a day, will suddenly go off to see a *powee*, one of the interminable plays which occupy a couple of days and nights, and then has a rest, and amuses himself, leaving his luckless employer to do the best he can until the fit for work returns, under the stimulus of an

empty pocket. .To diminish the sum of human suffering by enjoying one's-self, and abstaining from needless drudgery, is a sweet and sacred duty which cannot be evaded. When a Burman is aggrieved, it is very much of a toss-up whether he will commit suicide, or truculently slay his tormentor. at the first favourable opportunity. But on the whole, Buddhism regulates his life, and makes him a mild mannered and on the whole an amiable man, whom strangers find affable and helpful. The faith of Buddha has "given peace to the millions," and softened the inherent ferocity of Mongol nature. .

CHAPTER X.

KING THEEBAW'S HOME AND
FOREIGN POLICY.

The Surviving Princesses of King Mindo-Min's Family—
Death of the King by Poison—Theebaw Chosen by
the Southern Queen—The Massacre—Indignation of
the Government of India—Burmese Reply—Prince
Nyoung-Yan and his Brother—Emissaries sent to
Calcutta—Preparations for War—An Abortive Em-
bassy—The Bombay-Burma Company—Theebaw and
the French—Secret Negotiations—Liberality of the
French Offers—Protest of the British Government—
The Ultimatum.

I was fortunate enough, while in Upper Burma, to come into personal relations with Ranees and Princesses of King Mindo-Min's family who survived the massacre on the accession of King Theebaw to the throne. It will be seen that the information furnished by these survivors, who were so intimately concerned in those frightful events, throws considerable light upon the secret springs of one of the most frightful tragedies in history. To show in a succinct form all the horror of that tragedy in its external and political aspect, I cannot, perhaps, do better

than extract certain passages from official documents sent at the time from Mandalay to the Government of India. The unlooked for but apparently natural process of evolution by which the situation created by King Theebaw's measures resulted in an entanglement with France, and an invasion by the British, will form a necessary part of the story.

In October, 1878, King Mindo-Min died, and if we are to give credit to the testimony of survivors of his family, which a later chapter will give, he died by poison. Theebaw was chosen by the Southern Queen, Ale Nanmadaw, who had been the King's favourite wife, as the successor to the throne, mainly because, owing to certain palace rumours, ~~he~~ ^{she} was under a cloud, and must of necessity consent to the conditions of his powerful patroness, who, having no son, determined that he should marry her daughter, who would thus share his throne. This programme was successfully carried out. The Tyndah, an officer in command of the troops at Mandalay, mainly contributing to the result. But the other sons of King Mindo-Min might at anytime have made a counter-stroke which, if successful, would certainly have consigned the Southern Queen and her daughters, as well as Theebaw himself, to immediate death.

To the Southern Queen and Queen Supaya Lat, her second daughter, is attributed the plan of wholesale massacre which was to deliver them from a great danger, and consolidate the position of the new king. Theebaw had been educated as a monk, and he was still wearing the yellow robe of the monastic life. There is reason to believe that he knew nothing of what was contemplated, and that he was kept as much in the dark as to what was being done in his name on the occasion of the first great massacre, as he was, when his hour of ruin approached, of the declaration of war and the hostile advance of the British army. However this may be, on the 19th of February, 1879, the following telegram was sent from Mandalay by Mr. Shaw, the Resident, to the Foreign Secretary, Calcutta :—

“General slaughter of the late King’s sons, with their mothers, wives, children, some eighty souls, took place successive nights at prison, by order of the King. No provocation, conspiracy, or otherwise. Ministers supposed to disapprove ; people alarmed, horrified. I threatened to haul down flag if slaughter repeated.”

A subsequent despatch reduced the number of the slaughtered from eighty to thirty-two. The supposed disapproval of the ministers was

asserted on an erroneous estimate of the facts. Of course at such a time it was impossible to verify with any exactitude the accounts brought to the Residency by the Burmese friends of the victims, men and women, who were wild with terror and grief. But the accounts were subsequently shown to be substantially correct.

On the evening of the same day, the 19th February, Mr. Shaw made the following entry in his confidential diary :—

“ This morning brought full confirmation of the terrible news, which, it appears, are not longer denied. From the various accounts I gather that on Saturday night the removal of the political prisoners to the gaol, which had been cleared for them, commenced. Some were killed on that night, and the rest on the two succeeding nights. A large hole had been dug in the gaol precincts. Into this their bodies were thrown. Touching tales are told of how the women and children pleaded for their lives in vain. Their outcries were stifled by the hands of the executioners grasping their necks till they were strangled. Others were killed with bludgeons, which, in the hands of half-drunken men, often required to be used repeatedly before the victims were put out of their pain. The executioners

were some of the worst ruffians released for the purpose from the gaol which was now the scene of their cruelties. Of the Princes, the eldest, Thengze, alone showed courage. He is said to have laughed, and said to his brothers, 'See, I told you we should have no release but death.' On Sunday night (the 16th) eight cart-loads of the bodies of the Princes of the blood are said to have been conveyed out of the city by the western (or funeral) gate, and thrown into the river according to the custom. The other bodies were all thrown into the hole already dug in the gaol."

"When this terrible news was received in India, a feeling of horror fell upon the whole country. The Government sent a strong remonstrance, and warned the King that such acts must alienate the British Government. The official answer to this menacing communication was that "the King of Burma, being an independent sovereign, had a right to take all necessary measures to prevent disturbance in his dominions, without being subjected to the censure of others." This insolent reply was supplemented a day or two later by a note from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, declaring the action taken to be necessary in consideration of the past and the future :—"The Minister has safely received the

Resident's letters, dated respectively 20th and 21st February, 1879. Since the Grand Friendship Treaty entered into during the reign of his late Majesty in the year 1221 (1862, between the Burmese and British Governments, there has existed a real Royal friendship, and in conformity therewith the Burmese Government always desire and hope that the dominions of the British Government may be in peace and without disturbance; and the Minister trusts and believes that the British Government do also desire and hope the same with respect to the dominions of the Burmese Government. In regard to the clearing and keeping-by matter (*i.e.*, killing and imprisonment), the Minister would remark that such action is taken in consideration of the past and the future, only when there may exist a cause for disturbance. It is not desired to clear away and keep-by those whom it is not feared would cause any disturbance to the country, but the wish towards them is that they may live happily and contentedly. With reference to the clause contained in the Resident's letter, viz., that those whom it is not desired should live within the Royal dominions should be made over to the Resident for safe keeping, this sentiment being in exact accordance

with the marks of Grand Friendship, the Minister most gladly thanks the Resident."

The Burman Government began to prepare for war. The King reviewed his troops, which then numbered fifteen or sixteen thousand men. The Burmese Ministers were alarmed lest the warlike display should be resented by the Government of India. The British garrison in Lower Burma was reinforced. Yet the crisis passed over, the Government of India contenting itself with strong remonstrances denouncing the barbarous policy pursued by the King. The King was informed in express terms that a renewal of such acts would be visited with the severest displeasure. Other murders took place, however, amongst them being that of a favourite maid of honour of the Dowager Chief Queen :—

"Some unscrupulous ruffian accused the girl—as most affirm, falsely—with having more recently conveyed a photograph of the refugee Prince to the same lady, and the King gave orders that both she and her brother should be killed. The executioners proceeded to the gaol, where they found the girl being tended by her mother, who was daily allowed to bring her food. The old woman shrieked terribly when she learnt their mission, and was turned out of the premises,

when she at once rushed off and warned her son. The girl was murdered in the ordinary Burmese fashion. Her hands were bound between her knees ; two cords were fastened round her neck by means of which a man on either side forced back her head. While in this position another man struck her across the throat with a heavy bamboo. The girl was young and strong, and they say she endured seven blows before she died. The Dowager Chief Queen in vain interceded for her life, and wept bitterly when she heard her fate. When the executioners proceeded to the Punna Woon's house they found he had fled, and they had to content themselves with looting the premises."

In August, 1879, the position of the Resident at Mandalay being considered untenable, he was directed by the Government of India to withdraw. Two Princes, Nyoung Yan and Nyoung Oke, had escaped to the Residency before the massacre, and were removed under safe conduct to Calcutta. Nyoung Yan, a Prince of intellectual qualities and humane disposition, was believed to be the Prince whom the late King had intended to select as his successor. The Government of

India received the information that emissaries were sent from Mandalay to Calcutta for the assassination of Nyounng Yan. When the police told the suspected emissaries that they were being watched, they returned forthwith to Burma. The mother and sister of the Princes in Calcutta were kept alive as hostages, but were imprisoned in the palace, and kept in irons, to prevent the possibility of their escape.

The situation was so strained that the Burmese made attacks upon British steamers on the river, and it was proposed by Sir Charles Aitchison to denounce the existing treaties and revise fiscal arrangements exclusively in British interests. To enforce this policy he advised that we should blockade the salt supply and the rice supply to Upper Burma, and thus compel submission, by threatening famine. This measure would not necessarily have obliged the Burmese Government to give way, and therefore the Government at home deemed it inexpedient to proceed by way of blockade. The fact, however, that the Chief Commissioner counted upon the stoppage of the supply of rice and salt from the Lower country, as a means of producing a tem-

porary famine in the Upper country, has its significance in connection with the question of the resources of Upper Burma, and the producing power of that comparatively arid region.

Theebaw regarded the withdrawal of the Resident as a diplomatic triumph. It delivered him from menacing communications, in which he was bluntly told that he was a barbarian who had been guilty of a great crime. But he was afraid of military intervention, and he proceeded to manufacture torpedoes and breech-loaders. He sent an Embassy to the British frontier, to propose a draft treaty which would give him liberty to import arms. The Embassy was sent back, and the unlucky Ambassador was executed for having failed in his mission. It was then that Theebaw began to cast about for a French alliance. A scientific mission was sent to Europe in 1883, and after two years' negotiation in Paris, a commercial treaty was signed and the treaty drafted by Count de Rochechouart in 1873, and officially pronounced by the British Ambassador in Paris to be "objectionable," was apparently ratified.

Further occurrences took place at Mandalay, which gave serious umbrage to the British Government. While Theebaw's negotiations

with France were in progress, the Meingoon Prince endeavoured to get up an insurrection against the King. A number of his partisans were put in prison in Mandalay, and the occupants of the prison were massacred. It was alleged that there had been a revolt in the gaol, and that the slaughter was the result of the repressive measures demanded by the circumstances. The Tyndah maintains that this version of the occurrence was the true one. But it was not the one most generally believed. This second resort to the policy of massacre increased the difficulties in which Theebaw had involved himself and destroyed all confidence in his administration. To complete his danger, the claims which were urged against the ~~Bombay~~ Burma Trading Company were given a wild and impossible shape. It was alleged that the King had been defrauded of the royalty on large logs, which were passed down the river as small logs, and were included in the contract stipulating for the payment of a lump sum, insignificant in amount. The Hlootdaw dealt with the case in its judicial capacity, and gave judgment against the Company, inflicting a fine of double the royalty alleged to be due, amounting altogether to twenty-three lakhs—nearly a

quarter of a million of money. This high-handed measure created great alarm and indignation in Lower Burma, and when it was understood that the French Consul had undertaken to get a French Syndicate to take over the business of the Company, matters became very serious. When the Government of India proposed that the claim against the Company should be referred to arbitration, the Burmese Government took the high but impolitic ground that it was not proper to set aside the decree of its own court, and submit to a foreign arbitrator a question affecting the Burmese revenues. It was the more foolish to push the controversy so far, because there was no real intention of insisting on the payment of the preposterous fine—it was fixed at an impossible figure at the suggestion of the Kinwoon Mingyee, a friend of the Company, so that there might be no question of getting it paid. The Kinwoon desired to outplay the Tyndah, who was anxious to impose a severe, but not an impossible fine. An offer was made, a little later on, to the Company to accept one or two lakhs in settlement of all claims. But the mischief was done, and though the managers of the Corporation knew that it would be to their interest to close the dispute by a small payment, they were unable

to do so, for the question had passed into the hands of the Government, which regarded the refusal of arbitration as an additional offence, and would not condone it.

The real ground of offence, however, was the intriguing with foreign Powers. The relations between King Theebaw and the French agents became more intimate, as the displeasure of the British Government became more evident. On June the 4th, 1885, Mr. Bernard reported that he had seen sundry letters and papers concerning the progress of M. Haas, French Consul in Mandalay. Up to that time the Chief Commissioner had been of opinion that the French would not be willing to put down much ready money, and that, therefore, they would not get really valuable and serious concessions from the Burmese Government. But it is now believed "by Italians and others," conversant with Mandalay affairs, that capital to the amount of twenty-five million francs is to be subscribed under the auspices of the French Government; that the money is to be spent in founding a French bank, in starting French steamers on the Irrawady, in exploiting the jewel mines, and in establishing a traffic route from Upper Tongking through the Shan States to Mandalay. The

French Consul has ideas of lending the King money, and of eventually occupying in Ava some such position as the East India Company held in Bengal about a century ago.

"They argue apparently," wrote Mr. Bernard, "that even if England took the country, she would have to respect actual concessions to French subjects. I conjecture that more than half of this is talk, and that of the other half much will not come to pass at present. But I believe this much, namely, that French agents are trying to establish themselves strongly at Mandalay, with a view to joining hands at some future time with French possessions on the upper reaches of the Red River."

Before the end of the month the translation of two documents was received by Mr. Bernard, and the nature of the negotiations was placed beyond doubt. These documents appear to contain the heads of two agreements, "which it is proposed to conclude between the two Governments of France and Burma. The first relates to the construction of a railway between Mandalay and our Toungeo frontier at the joint expense of the French Government and a company to be formed for the purpose. The capital is to be £2,500,000

(or Napoleons) ; the line is to be completed in seven years ; and the concession is to last for seventy years, at the end of which period the railway becomes the property of the Burmese Government. Interest is fixed at the high rate of 90* per cent. per annum, and its payment is secured by the hypothecation of the river customs and earth-oils of the kingdom."

The second document gives the terms for the "establishment by the French Government and a company of a bank with a capital of two-and-a-half crores of rupees. Loans are to be made to the Burmese sovereign at the rate of 12 per cent. per annum, and other loans at 18 per cent. The bank is to issue notes, and it is to have the management of the ruby mines, and the monopoly of pickled tea, and is to be administered by a Syndicate of French and Burmese officials." So far as the present papers show, the terms are still in the proposal stage. "These agreements," said Mr. Bernard, "if they were finally ratified and carried out, would give the French Government, or a Syndicate on which

* NOTE.—In the Burmese copy of the "heads of agreement" the interest is stated at 75 per thousand per month. Possibly this is a mistake, and 7½ per cent. per annum is meant.

the French Government would be represented, full control over—

- (a) the principal sources of revenue in Upper Burma ;
- (b) the trade by steamers or boats on the Irrawady river ;
- (c) the only railway line in Upper Burma ;
- (d) the only route now open for traffic from British ports to Western China.

Mr. Bernard stated that in his opinion the effect of these arrangements, if carried out, would be to make France and French influence, altogether dominant, and would in the end extrude British trade from the valley of the Upper Irrawady. These consequences, he added, would be disastrous to British interests in Lower Burma. "If Upper Burma were practically under a French protectorate with its only or chief access to the sea across a British railway or along a British river, there would be the probability of frequent differences between English and French officials on the two sides of the Ava border ; and these differences might any day become serious. The French, if established in Ava, would attempt to get other European nations to join them in (as it were) neutralising

Ava and making the Irrawady river open, to vessels of all the world, on some such footing as the Danube now is."

Mr. Bernard, who had studied the Burmese question for five years, had come to the conclusion that annexation was undesirable, partly because any symptom of a revival of the policy of annexation might create alarm and anxiety in the Native States and in the frontier countries, such as Nepaul, Sikkim, and the like, and partly because it was doubtful whether the people of Upper Burma wished to become British subjects. Nevertheless, he was of opinion that if the King of Burma refused to abandon his French alliance, it would be necessary to abandon the policy of non-intervention, and consider the question of annexing the kingdom of Ava.

Further information showed that the plan for making a French railway from Mandalay southwards to the British frontier in the Tounghoo district, had gone so far, that the terms of a contract had been drawn up, providing that the French Government and the members of the Company advancing the money and working the railway, should make an outlay of 2,500,000

sterling (or Napoleons) which were to be divided into four instalments.

“The first instalment of 625,000 shall bear interest at 75 per mille ($7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.) per mensem from the date of its arrival (in the country), and the second, third, and fourth instalments shall bear similarly from their respective dates of arrival the same rate of interest as the first instalment. It is desired to complete the construction in seven years. For a period of seventy years from the date of completion, no fares shall be charged for passages on the Burmese Government service. All other fares and moneys received the French Government and members of the company desire to take altogether for themselves. In consideration that an outlay has to be made for the expenses of construction, it is desired that the Burmese Government shall by way of the guarantee include in the ‘Railway contract’ the Yattanabon customs.

“These customs are the import customs on all European goods *via* the river Irrawady, on the right and left banks of the river Irrawady, and the earth-oil customs, the duties whereof shall be levied jointly by an agent commissioned by the French Government and one commissioned by the Burmese Government, and the receipts whereof shall

be set off against the interest due on the outlay for expenses of construction of the railway. Should the receipts exceed the interest, the surplus shall become money belonging to the Burmese Government. Should they fall short of the interest, the Burmese Government will fully satisfy the deficiency. On the expiry of the seventy years, the French Government and members of the company shall not demand from the Burmese Government the cost of the expense incurred on the railway material and plant, which shall become the property of the Burmese Government. There was also a contract providing that the French Government and the members of the company should lay out in Burma a capital of Rs. 25,000,000, one-half of which, namely, Rs. 12,500,000 shall be constituted the share of the Burmese Government, interest on the outlay whereof shall run at 1 per cent. Of the capital of Rs. 25,000,000, one-half, namely, Rs. 12,500,000, shall consist of silver money (or specie), and the remaining half of notes. A bank with a capital consisting of these two items amounting to Rs. 25,000,000 shall be established in Burma, and shall charge an interest of 1 per cent. on sums which the sovereign may draw upon it for royal expenses or royal works, and an interest of $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on sums which private

persons and traders of the country may draw upon it according to custom for trade purposes. In the event of an agreement being entered into whereby the bank may be established, the ruby mine and tea revenue shall be included in the 'Bank Contract,' whereunder they may be held and worked as monopolies. The working of the bank shall be managed by French and Burmese officers, and the profits shall be equally divided. From the half profit shall be deducted the interest due on the first-mentioned half share of capital, namely, Rs. 12,500,000, and the remainder, if any, shall be taken as the portion of the Burmese Government."

All this was very specific, and left no room for doubt as to what was in contemplation. But M. de Freycinet, when pressed on the subject, repudiated any intention of acquiring for France a political predominance in Burma, and declared that English influence in Burma would not be questioned by the Government of the Republic.

The Government of India at once acted on this admission. An ultimatum has addressed to King Theebaw, giving him four days to consent to receive a British Resident, and agree to submit his foreign policy to the approval of the Government of India. Verbally Theebaw refused the ultimatum. But as the Burmese diplomatists

subsequently declared when the grand crash came, it might have been seen that when he said 'no,' he meant 'yes.' The tone of the document seems to justify this statement. But the receipt of the 'no' was followed by the advance of the British expedition and the immediate collapse of the Burmese monarchy, which fell in like a house of cards.

The folly of the King in pursuing a course which could have had no other result, was fully equalled by that of the French diplomatists, who produced a catastrophe which they ought to have foreseen, and could not possibly do anything to avert. The justification for the intervention of the British Government could not have been more complete. The only explanation that suggests itself for the fatuity of the Franco-Burmese project of alliance, is that the prevalent belief in the earlier part of the year, that a war between Russia and England was inevitable, must have inspired the hope that the Government of India would have sufficient work on its north-western frontier, to occupy all its attention, and that no force could be spared for operations in Upper Burma. This expectation has not been realised. Theebaw is ruined, and M. Haas has found it necessary to return to France from Mandalay on sick leave.

CHAPTER XI.

FRENCH POLICY IN BURMA.

M. de Bouteiller Succeeds M. Haas—A Short Controversy - Annexation for Diplomatic Reasons—The Italian Consul, M. Andreino—Counterworking the French - The Cause of Theebaw's Ruin—Justification of British Intervention—The Official Report on French Policy in the Indo-Chinese Peninsula—The Franco-Burmese Negotiations—The Siamese-Shan Railway Project.

THE Thooreah brought up to Mandalay M. de Bouteiller, the French Consul, who was appointed to succeed M. Haas, when the French Government began to realise that the health of the latter had become so precarious, that his return to Paris was absolutely necessary. Upon M. de Bouteiller's arrival in Rangoon, direct from France, he learned that King Theebaw had been deposed, and that the British forces were in possession of Mandalay. He applied to the authorities in Rangoon for a pass to enable him to proceed to Mandalay in some native craft, as the regular

service of steamers was suspended, and he could not well ask the favour of a passage in a Government transport. The Chief Commissioner said that the King to whom M. de Bouteiller was accredited being no longer in power, there could be no object in the Consul designate going to Mandalay ; the English was the only authority there.

This communication suggested to the Consul the inquiry, whether it was to be taken as an official announcement that Upper Burma had been annexed ? By no means, was the answer ; it only referred to the question of fact ; King Theebaw no longer ruled, and there was no one to whom M. de Bouteiller could present his credentials. If there be an irregularity, retorted the Consul, not at all disposed to admit that he had the worst of it, it is not I who am responsible, but those who, having removed the King, have not put themselves, or any one else in his place. But a triumph of logic may be bought, like other triumphs, at too dear a price, and so it proved a little later on. M. de Bouteiller had scarcely arrived in the consulate at Mandalay before a decree of annexation, avowedly "issued for diplomatic reasons" removed the element of

irregularity in the political situation which he had so acutely pointed out.

However, M. de Bouteiller had argued his case well while at Rangoon. The principle that regulates such cases was, he contended, shown by recent precedents. When the French entered Tunis they found there the English, the German, the Italian, and other Consuls. But the French General did not tell them that the Bey having been reduced to submission, they should go about their business, as there was nothing for them to do. The fact that a situation so peculiar had been created by his own act rendered it the more essential for the protection of the interests entrusted to the Consuls that they should stay at their posts. They waited, and the situation was in due course regularised by the convention with the Bey, which constituted the French Resident the Bey's Foreign Minister. Then the Consuls knew to whom they had to address themselves. But they were still Consuls while the French arrangements had yet to be made; no one thought of calling their status in question. M. de Bouteiller maintained that in Mandalay the case was parallel. There was in that city no King, because the English had removed him. They

had given no intimation to the Powers that they had put any one in his place. But there was in the capital a Consulate, with its archives, which could not be left derelict ; there were French citizens who could not be left without protection while unexpected events were in progress. This interesting little controversy seems to have found its solution in M. de Boutciller taking a berth on board the first commercial steamer which proceeded to Mandalay after the deportation of Theebaw, and that steamer happened to be the *Thooreah*.

I believe it is regarded as certain that the French Consulate at Mandalay will be closed, there being no particular use for it in the new state of things. If a Vice-Consulate at Bhamo should seem to be required for the protection of French traders who may seek to reach that market from Cochin China and Tonquin, it may possibly be established later on.

What will become of M. Andreino and the Italian Consulate at Mandalay it is too soon to say. People in Mandalay credit him with effecting the ruin of M. Haas's too sanguine hopes. He is a man of great experience, which has sharpened the edge of his Italian diplomacy. For a time he indulged in dreams of Italian

influence in Mandalay, but the Roman Cabinet was too apathetic or too clear sighted to waste its energies in so remote a region. Finding that he could not do much for Italy, it occurred to him—so every one in that city says at all events—that he could do an ill turn to the French. He had access to secret information as to the communications between M. Haas and the King's Ministers. Certain documents were surreptitiously copied, not by M. Andreino, but by an individual whose name has been given me, but which it is better to forget. The documents that were copied, were a little vague, but they were very suggestive, and good use was made of them. The intrigues going on could never have led to the establishment of French predominance in Mandalay while Rangoon and the Irrawady were in British hands, but the disturbing effect on the Burmese could not be disregarded. They brought our troops to Mandalay, and sent King Theebaw to India.

It is said that M. Andreino is now rather agitated at the extent of the destruction which has been accomplished by the thunderbolt devised to siuge M. Haas' moustache. He is considered to be in personal danger from the vindictiveness of the Burmese, who regard him rightly or wrongly

as the cause of the troubles which have overwhelmed the monarchy. I rather think his chagrin—if he feels it—will be shared by the Bombay-Burma Trading Company, who could never in cold-blood have contemplated the risk of the annihilation of the practical monopoly of the teak forests. Not that the company enjoyed, as is supposed, the whole of the monopoly in question; it was the chief, the Vanderbilt, of the monopolists, but not the sole. Mr. Bernard, if he be Lieutenant-Governor, will not be so easy to deal with as King Theebaw or the Kinwoon Mingyee. And Moulmein will petition the Government to cancel all Theebaw's leases in the interests of free trade in timber. However, there is no reason for despondency, though I doubt not there is some repining. The company has a capital with which none of its rivals can compete; it has the pick of the forests; it has the Bombay teak trade in its hands. It can hold its own, and survive the crash of kingdoms.

There can be no doubt that the signature of a convention in Paris on the 18th January, 1885, by the Burmese ambassadors on one side, and M. Jules Ferry, Minister for Foreign Affairs and President of the Council, on the other, was the

principal cause of the ruin of Theebaw. That the French had the intention of gaining a footing in the Upper Valley of the Irrawady may be regarded as certain. The signature of the commercial treaty in Paris was intended to contribute to that end. There is some reason to believe that there was a secret article to the convention, according to which the French promised that at some future time, when communications through Tongking were opened up, they would supply the Burmese Government with arms. There is no certain proof of the existence of this article, but there is a moral certainty which may dispense with absolute demonstration.

Something more than a moral certainty exists as to the drafting of a convention very hostile to British interests, concluded between the Government of Burma and a representative of the French Government. A copy of this draft has come into the possession of the Government of India. Whether it was ever submitted to, and accepted by, the French Government, it is difficult to say. The subject of the negotiations carried on by the French Consul at Mandalay during the last few months of Theebaw's reign has not yet been thoroughly investigated, but enough has been ascertained

to show that the Government of India was fully justified in regarding with disapproval and resentment the perilous course to which Theebaw and his advisers were committing the Burman monarchy. When Lord Salisbury communicated with the French Government on the subject of the negotiations in progress, M. de Freycinet disclaimed any intention on the part of that Government to pursue an anti-English policy, or to encourage aspirations against the Anglo-Indian Government. These assurances, though satisfactory in themselves, and followed up subsequently by a repudiation of M. Haas' negotiations, and a declaration that Burma was outside the sphere of French influence, could not be regarded as sufficient to re-establish confidence. The report on French policy in the far East, drawn up by M. Launesan and read by him in the French Chamber, and published in the French official papers, was in its tone and scope sufficient to throw considerable doubt upon the value of M. de Freycinet's disclaimers.

The report was drawn up to express the views of a committee appointed to examine the commercial convention which had just been agreed to. It was not confined to an examination and approval of the convention, but took a com-

prehensive view of the state of things generally throughout the Indo-Chinese Peninsula, and the prospects of advancing French interests therein. It was pointed out that France having acquired the supremacy in Annam and Tongking, had gained access to two important territories, namely, Bassac, which was in part dependent on the kingdom of Siam, and Luang Prabang in the north, which was the point of contact and intercourse between the Burmese, Shans, Annamese, and the Chinese of Yunnan. The King of Luang Prabang pays a triennial tribute to Annam, and the report says significantly, that "it is not necessary to demonstrate the importance of a fact of this nature, or the advantage to be derived by us from it."

There was no disguise as to what was in the minds of the Commission when drawing up the report. It is stated that "Independent Burma and Siam are far from being regularly organised kingdoms. A great portion of these two kingdoms," the report continues, "is occupied by tribes still almost entirely uncivilised, over whom the sovereigns of Mandalay only exercise rights of suzerainty. Such are with respect to Burma, the Burmese Shan States lying between Burma and China, States, over which the poten-

tates at Peking and Mandalay claim equally to exercise rights which neither the one nor the other can do effectively." The men who went into the discussion of such questions as these were manifestly thinking more of building up an Indo-Chinese Empire than of the merits of a commercial convention as such.

The course of the official relations between France and Burma was sketched in this remarkably indiscreet report, in a manner which was in itself sufficient to arouse the suspicions of the British Government as to what was happening in Burma. In 1865 King Mindo-Min, who had already concluded a treaty of commerce with England and with Italy, made overtures to Louis Napoleon with a view to a similar treaty with France. "For motives, of the real nature of which we are ignorant, but at which we can make a shrewd guess," says the report with a sneer, "as we know to what prejudices the Empire was a slave in its external relations, the advances of Burma were repulsed." Perhaps, instructed by the logic of events, M. Lanessan now understands why Napoleon III. declined to give umbrage to the British Government on the side of Burma. He would not tread, where M. Haas rushed in, with the approval of M. Lanessan. In 1872,

when the Republic had succeeded the Empire, a Burmese embassy arrived in Paris to propose for the second time to the French Government a treaty of commerce. In January, 1873, a convention was signed, and in the following year the Count de Rochechouart was sent to Mandalay to exchange ratifications. He signed, without authority, a secret convention, the nature of which is not disclosed. The French Government disavowed their agent. The convention was not ratified, and the original treaty remained a dead-letter.

No more negotiations took place in King Mindo-Min's time, nor in the first few years of Theebaw's reign. But in 1883 that King finding himself in difficulties with the Shans, who were in insurrection, and being on bad terms with the Government of India, and knowing that the French were then established in Tongking, sent an embassy to Paris to effect the ratification of the treaty of 1873. The embassy brought a letter from the King, which explained the reasons that prompted him to renew negotiations. "The sovereigns of great countries," said Theebaw, unconscious that he was entering on a path which would lead him straight to the abyss, "ought always to keep in mind the prosperity of their subjects and the interests of their traders,

as well as the development of their relations and the exchange of products, the construction of public works, and the introduction of the sciences into their country. To this end they should cement and strengthen their existing treaties, or make new ones, so as to promote exportation and importation with neighbouring countries. Once Burma and France were a long way off from one another, and relations between them were difficult. Now, through the occupation by France of the province of Tongking, the two countries have a common boundary, that is to say, that they are in contact on the eastern frontier of Burma, where lie the provinces of Kienton and Kien-Youn-Ghie. The province of Tongking and the two provinces of Kienton and Kien-Youn-Ghie have a common boundary with the Chinese province of Yunnan. The inhabitants of these provinces maintain commercial relations with the Chinese by communications which have existed for many long years. There are in Burma French engineers, officers and traders whose operations daily increase in importance. Consequently, His Majesty, our august King, foreseeing in the future the augmentation of their relations, and of their exchange of products, as well as the increase of their pros-

perity and mutual interests, has conceived the project of concluding a treaty between France and Burma." On the 18th of January, 1885, more than two years afterwards, a convention was signed, which opened Burma to French commerce, and placed France and Burma reciprocally on the footing of the most favoured nation. No exception can be taken to the convention as it stands ; but article eleven dealing with the right to import arms and ammunition assumes a certain interest when described and commented upon in the report to the Chambers:—"It is not formally stated in the treaty that the trade in arms can be freely exercised on Burmese soil by French merchants, but as no article forbids the commerce, and also article two stipulates for its entire liberty of all dealings, it must be concluded that the liberty of the trade in arms is, as other branches of commerce, placed under the safeguard of the treaty. This point is of importance, for in all countries of little civilisation the trade in arms is one of the most profitable for European traders." That a certain importance attaches to this reference to the prospect of a profitable trade in arms, cannot be doubted when it is taken in connection with the moral certainty to which

reference has been made that the French representative agreed to an undertaking that at a future time Burma would be supplied with arms through Tongking. The incorporation of Burma in the Queen's dominions of course puts an end to whatever engagements King Theebaw may have contracted with France or any other foreign Power. That great and decisive act must be deemed justified, since it has put an end, at once and for ever, to intrigues, actual or potential, which would inevitably have led to serious foreign complications, if matters were left to take their course.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PRINCESSES OF KING
MINDO-MIN'S FAMILY.

Burmese Refugees—King Mindo-Min's Family—Pensions to the Princesses—Deportation to Rangoon—The Slaughter of the Princes—The Crown Prince—King Mindo-Min Poisoned—The Accession of Theebaw—Character of that Kind—Palace Intrigues—The Yanoung Prince—The King's Library—Court Manners.

ON Christmas Day I visited a number of Burmese Princesses, who had sought refuge with Mrs. Antram, a Greek lady, living with her mother and brothers in a house in Mandalay. Each of these ladies was the heroine of a tragio story. At the time of the massacres one of the two Princes who escaped was the amiable and clever Nyoung Yan, who was regarded as certain to be King of Burma if he had lived, but he died a few months ago. He had been sent for like

the rest, to go to the Palace, where certain death awaited him. But suspecting what was intended, he dressed himself as a coolie and proceeded to Mr. Colbeck's house. His mother, the Ranee Myauk Shway Pyah, and his sister, the Princess Souk Chouk Minthamee, were imprisoned, and for the last seven years have been inmates of the common jail, the court not even providing money for their food. They were kept alive as hostages for the good behaviour of the fugitive princes. Friends surreptitiously sent them from time to time a little money. There were also in prison in the same plight Queen Limban, mother of Salin Supaya, the Princess who turned nun to avoid marrying in her father's lifetime, and died by poison or slow starvation. Limban's sons had been slain in the massacre. The Ranee Saygrine was a prisoner; and so was Prince Chelin, son of King Mindo-Min and Queen Limban. Four others, two of them Princesses, grand-daughters of the late King and Limban, were also immured.

On one occasion the ladies of this group were sent for to the Palace to see Queen Supaya Lat in her glory, dressed up in royal robes. Her Majesty gave them a dinner, a dress a-piece, and a hundred rupees, and then packed them back

to jail. She had seen them, and she had shown them how well she herself had got on in the world.

When the English troops came to Mandalay the guards fled from the prison ; the royal prisoners, as one of them simply said, thought they might as well go too, and they sought shelter in Mrs. Antram's house. What was to be done with these remnants of King Mindo-Min's family ? All their property had been seized ; they were out of prison, but they were ruined and penniless. I saw the Princess, Souk Chouk Minthamee, sister of Nyoung Yan, whose grave and sad young face shows the traces of her seven years' imprisonment and the daily anxieties for life and food. She was timid to a degree, having of course never in her palace life seen strangers, and in prison she was cut off from all contact with the outer world. But her dark inquiring eye scrutinised everything, and watched the lips of her visitors as if to divine their words. A little Princess of eight came running into the room ; she was of royal blood on both sides, and her parents had been among the slaughtered. Her death was decreed, but she was saved by the devotion of her nurse, who ran to a hiding-place with her, and escaped

afterwards with her into the country. Arrested later on Queen Supaya Lat proposed that the original decree should be carried out. A minister urged on her Majesty that she was only a girl, and that nothing would be gained by putting a little child of her age to death. She was pardoned, and taken into the Palace, where she was often treated very unkindly.

Then there was Princess Youngmin, daughter of Eim-shay-Min, the Crown Prince, who was killed in a rebellion got up by Prince Meingoon, now under French protection. She was allowed Rs. 250 a month by Queen Supaya Lat. All these personages, the survivors of one of the saddest tragedies on record, are in Mrs. Antram's modest house. Of course their necessities were brought to the notice of Colonel Sladen, the Ministers, and the Chief Commissioner. It cannot be said that any time was lost in considering and adjudicating on their claims such as they were. But I am afraid to affirm that the allowances accorded were as liberal as they were prompt. There was something temporary and provisional in the maintenance offered, and a more becoming and adequate provision will probably be yet made for the necessities of the murdered family of King Mindo-Min. Here are

the monthly allowances which have been granted to this group of personages of royal blood :—To the three Queens Limban, Theetpan, and Saygrine, rupees thirty each ; to Prince Chelin, son of King Mindo-Min, two maids of honour, two Princesses, grand-daughters of the King and Limban—one hundred rupees for the five. Princess Youngmin was offered Rs. 15; she said she would be ashamed to take a sum which would make her less than a coolie, who could earn as much ; she would not submit to a degradation, but would try and work for her bread. Three Princesses, daughters of Queen Naquine, thirty rupees—ten rupees each. It will probably strike the general public that this is pensioning royalty off very cheaply, indeed. How bitter is the bread eaten at the table of another ; and how hard is the way up and down the stairs of another ? A day or two after Christmas, Mr. Bernard and Colonel Sladen decided that the Ranees Limban, Theetpan, and Saygrine should be at once sent down to Rangoon. An order to the same effect was sent to the Ranee Khunyaw Minda and her five daughters, and to the Rance Myouk Shway and the Princess Souk Chouk Minthamee and several others—twenty-one in all. Allowances

similar to those already mentioned, were made to them, but Myouk Shway and her daughter received Rs. 150 between them. They were ordered to proceed to Rangoon on board the transport *Aloung Payah*. Colonel Sladen himself came very courteously to see them on board, and spoke to them kindly. On the 28th December they left Mandalay, a guard of six soldiers having been taken on board for the protection of the ship. When the order came somewhat suddenly that they were all to go down together to Rangoon in a Government steamer, they were considerably taken aback. They were not sorry, indeed, to leave Mandalay. The *Tyndah* was still in power—and had been until the very day when the order for their deportation had arrived. That Minister had sent an order to Mrs. Antram a few days before to give them up to a guard, which was sent for them. What did he want of them? There was consternation in the household. But one or two Englishmen, hearing of the affair, got Major Fisher to send down a guard of soldiers, declaring that the house was under military protection, and that none of its inmates could be taken away without the written order of the General. The demand of the *Tyndah*, with his grim reputation, caused

TORTURING A BOY.

great trepidation, and the idea of leaving Mandalay was not of itself unwelcome to those concerned. But nearly all the men of the family had been killed off in the massacres, and the hapless and helpless survivors of the princesses were going into exile. The letter directing their departure expressly stated that those to whom it preferred were to be 'deported' to Rangoon. How were the ladies to face the journey, not knowing a word of English, or having any one in charge of them? In great anxiety, they asked Mr. Colbeck beseechingly if I would not come in the same steamer as I was going to Lower Burma. To their great relief I consented to go down with them in the steamer, as far as Prome. I found my fellow-passengers very communicative and agreeable, and desirous to show their appreciation of my acquiescence in their request to accompany them down the river. When an interpreter could be procured they spoke freely, and with an evident desire to give any information which they possessed in regard to the affairs of the Palace. They speak of their misfortunes as of matters which could not be helped, without any desire to make the worst of them. The Ranee Khunyaw Minda mentions quite as if it

were only one of the ordinary misfortunes of life, that when her second grandson died of small-pox, she was suspected of having smuggled him out of the Palace in girl's clothes. She and her surviving grandson, who is on board the steamer with her now—a boy about eleven years of age—were shut up again in prison, and kept without food for two days to make them tell where the missing boy was. Torture was tried upon the poor boy; he was tied with his hands and legs apart, his wrist being sprained, or broken, by the cord. Of course he could tell nothing but that his brother was dead. Khunyaw Minda's son—the father of these two boys was King Mindo-Min's elder son—Prince Thunzde, the Prince of the Thirty Cities. His mother endeavoured to get the King when dying to appoint him as his successor, but the monarch was in a sort of trance, and could not understand. When the Prince was about to be put to death, his half-brother, Prince Mekran, who was in the same plight, earnestly besought his murderers not to kill him, but to put out his eyes—which would be a disqualification for the throne—so that he might enjoy his life yet a little while. Prince Thunzde, addressing his unhappy relative, said—"My brother! it is not becoming

to beg for life ; we must die, for it is the custom. Had you been made King, you would have given the same order. Let us die, since it is fated that we must die, and not make an appeal which will not be heard !” They died together.

It is said that the Tyndah and Yanoung helped, with their own hands, to despatch some of the Princes and Princesses. An infant of three months was amongst the slaughtered. I have already mentioned the little Princess who was saved by her nurse flying with her, and finding a safe hiding-place.

It all happened, said one of the two Ranees, when, recounting those horrors, because Supaya Lat was wicked. Theebaw was not wicked, but he listened to her ; see what comes of a man obeying a woman !—a reflection which occurs naturally to a Burmese lady who is brought up to reverence her helpmeet, and not to rule him. While I am referring to Burmese sentiment I may mention that Burmans have such a high opinion of kindly and equitable natures that they believe that good tempered Englishmen will be rewarded in the next re-birth by being Buddhists and Burmans.

The five daughters of the Ranee Khunyaw are some of them still in their teens. They are timid, as might indeed be expected of young ladies who have lived a secluded and precarious life since

they were children, and have spent three years in prison, daily expecting the order for their execution. But they are well mannered and well bred, unassuming and self-possessed in a pretty young lady-like way. For the first three days of the voyage Mr. Callogreedy, brother of Mrs. Antram, was on board, and as he knew Burmese they were able to communicate with Captain Jacks and myself. Mr. Callogreedy's brother was slain by the Burmese while we were going down the river, but he only learned this afterwards. When Mr. Callogreedy left the steamer to recover drifting rafts of timber belonging to the Bombay-Burma Corporation, the ladies were very much isolated, for there was no interpreter at hand. They prayed often and fervently as they passed pagodas, chatting anxiously amongst themselves at other times. They were very affectionate and kindly one to the other. Every pagoda, where we pass, is generally an excuse for a prayer, or, to speak more correctly, for the utterance of pious aspirations. Rightly speaking there is no divinity for the Buddhist tease with supplications : what is decreed will happen ; they only venture on the expression of pious wishes.

The royal party had twenty attendants, many of them foster mothers, or, as they are termed and considered, " second mothers." No Princess

of the royal family is allowed to suckle a child herself. The duty is assigned to nurses who are looked upon afterwards as in some sort forming part of the family. These people approach the Princess on their knees, or on hands and knees, and seem to be greatly attached to their mistresses, who speak to them kindly, and even caressingly. The Princesses are all poor ; their property having been dissipated during the troubles. They were finally beggared by a cruel request, which was of course an order, from the Queen Supaya Lat, a couple of years ago, that they should present her with gifts by way of dowry, as they had given her nothing on her accession. What little jewellery they had concealed, or otherwise preserved, had to be brought out and sold out at any price it might fetch to brokers in the city. The proceeds went to procure the gifts for the Queen, and they were left penniless. No doubt this was a politic device to deprive them of all resources, for the Queen had such a superabundance of jewellery that she could not have been greedy of more, at the cost of her luckless relations.

The pensions bestowed upon the Princesses by the British Government have filled up the cup of their bitterness. The Ranee Khunyaw and her five daughters, whose ages range from

eighteen to twenty-eight, get a hundred rupees per mensem amongst them. Myouk Shway and her daughter, who are, it is said, reserved for greater fortunes, are accorded Rs. 150 a month between them. One Princess, who has neither father nor mother, nor brothers and sisters, being offered Rs. 15 a month, wept, and said she could not accept it, for it would degrade her in the eyes of the people who would think she was a coolie. The other ladies accepted their first instalment with reluctance and a little shame. It seems inexplicable that such paltry stipends should be given to personages of royal rank, if their claims be recognised at all. Colonel Sladen, I hear, wished to be a little more liberal, but his fifties were cut down to thirties and his twenties to tens.

The Viceroy, or the Secretary of State, will probably take an early opportunity of revising this scale of pensions. Even the Tyndah, suspected as he is, is allowed Rs. 250 a month, though he is said to have taken care of his own interests, and is supposed to possess ample means which, however acquired, are now his own.

A rupee a head all round per diem was allowed to the captain of the Aloung Pyah for the diet of his interesting passengers—Rs. 41 a day. Their diet was principally rice and beef.

two or three cows being fortunately purchasable at an intermediate station. The ladies occupied the saloon, which was none too spacious. When an officer came to the saloon deck, the ladies all fled into their cabins and laid by till he took his departure, the two Ranees acting the part of vigilant and adroit duennas. Their signal for disappearance was always obeyed cheerfully, and without an instant's hesitation.

I have been favoured by some of these royal ladies with the result of their observations of the routine of political life in the Palace at Mandalay. They do not speak vindictively of King Theebaw, or ascribe to him personally the slaughter of their relations, and the sufferings and dangers which they themselves have undergone. He was a man, they say in a kindly tone, of a fond heart, and had those around him left him to carry out his own intentions there would have been no massacres. All the misfortunes which befell are ascribed by them to the Queen Dowager and her daughter Supaya Lat. This remarkable Queen, I hear from Europeans who saw her on her departure from the Palace, is handsome, or would be so but for a cold and cruel mouth; she has large eyes denoting great intelligence and vivacity. Her complexion is decidedly dark for a

himself was looked upon as of doubtful origin. He had been wearing the monk's dress since he was seven years old ; mild and amiable in manners, he was very well educated for a Burmese Prince. He had passed three examinations. If he were married to one of the Queen's daughters—Supaya Lat, the second daughter for choice—and was made King—the Crown Princes and all the other Princes being made away with, the Queen could keep her power and assure the future of her daughters. The marriage with the daughters being accomplished, he was proclaimed King. The situation for all concerned was, however, one of awful peril. The massacre was effected by the orders of the Queen Dowager, of the Queen and of the Ministers. At first it was intended to prevent any knowledge of what was done from getting to the ears of the Resident. But the escape of Nyoung Yan and of his brother Nyoung Oke, and other circumstances, rendered secrecy impossible, and the Kinwoon Mingyee defended the act as customary and legal, and as necessary in the interests of state.

These survivors do not lay any especial part of the responsibility for the slaughter at the door of the Tyndah, though they speak of him as a very formidable man. They blame the two

Queens—Supaya Lat and her mother, the Southern Queen. They describe Supaya Lat as very harsh and vehement, and as a woman who shrink from nothing. The Ministers would have been themselves killed by the Queen's order if they disobeyed. They give as an instance what befell Yanoung Prince, a young man, who was made a Prince and a favourite of Theebaw on his accession to the throne. The King at that time, in his remorse, give way to drink, at the instance of this youth, who further advised him to solace himself with additional wives so as to make up the mystic number of four Queens—of the North, South, East, and West—dear to Burmese monarchs. He also remonstrated with the King for giving way on all points to Supaya Lat, telling him that people were laughing at him for not making his own will prevail. The Queen took alarm, and accused the favourite of hatching a plot against the King. Getting the Ministers to support the charge, she obtained a royal order for the arrest of the accused. The moment the Yanoung Prince was taken to prison he was strangled. The King was informed that he had committed suicide with a pair of scissors, and believed the story. The three additional wives all died in a period of a year or two.

The Tyndah waited on one of them, and said that he had received orders from the Queen to put her to death. The doomed woman said, "Don't put me to death; I will take poison!" She turned round and got the poison, which was in readiness, and swallowed it. The King was told that one of these ladies had died of cholera, another of fever, and that a third had been found dead from violence, but that no one knew who had killed her. It was well known at the Palace that neither Supaya Lat nor her mother was to be trifled with. The King meant well, but was under their influence, and that of the Ministers whom they ruled, holding, very literally, the strings of life and death in their hands.

One of the Princesses, who had been taken into Queen Supaya Lat's service, gave me an interesting account of the daily life in the Palace. The Queen having a fancy to this young lady was, she says, very kind to her on the whole, though whenever Her Majesty was angry she was very rough to her, and she was very cross indeed to all the others. The King and Queen breakfasted together at nine in the morning, one or two of the maids of honor alone being present to wait on them. At two there

was tiffin, and dinner at six. The King did not drink strong liquor ; he was never drunk except during a period few months after his accession. He then drank heavily, being induced to do so by the young man Yanoung. In fits of fury from intoxication, the King would seize a spear and run after the maids of honour, and even after the Queen herself, terrifying them, as if he would kill them.

Another of the Princesses, of considerable intelligence, tells me that Theebaw used to pretend to want to slay the maids of honour, and the Queen, to drive them out in order to be able to have tête-a-têtes with his new wives married at the instance of Yanoung. After the six o'clock dinner the King assembled the Ministers, and until nine o'clock discussed the affairs of the country. The Queen was not present at these conferences, except on rare occasions. But she always knew what took place, sending one of the maids of honour to listen, and bring her word when she did not care to listen herself. She very seldom spoke to any of the Princesses or others about these things. She did not give orders to the Ministers, but she spoke to the King. Nevertheless the Queen did give orders for people to be killed without the instruction of

the King. Moungh Chown, a magistrate, and Shway Hlan, also a magistrate, were believed to be the ministers of the Queen in such matters. The King sometimes enquired where was so-and-so, who had been executed unknown to him. Then he was told that they died of disease. The King had only his wives; he did not speak to the maids of honour; three of the wives are dead. The Tyndah killed two by order of the Queen. This statement must be taken as expressing the belief in the Palace only, and not of course as conclusive evidence that the belief was well-founded. They were not killed at once, but at intervals, lasting over eighteen months. The Queen Supaya Lat had the upper hand of him, and he was very smooth with her. He knew that he owed everything to her, and to her mother, who had befriended him when he and his mother were in disgrace. His mother was sent down out of the Palace into the garden. King Mindo-Min said he would have her put to death; but the Ministers said it would not be wise to make a scandal, which would injure the royal name, and religion also. Asked why the late King had been so incensed with Theebaw's mother, my informant smiled, and pleaded ignorance. But the truth

is, that the King fancied he had reason to be jealous of a certain Phoongyee. Theebaw was made a Phoongyee, and wore the monk's yellow dress, from the time he was six or seven. The mother of Supaya Lat preferred him to any of the others, and he had no one to look to but herself; he had been taught by the Phoongyees, and was better educated than the other Princes. The Queen thought he would marry one of her three daughters if he were made King, and she brought it about. His alligations to the Dowager Queen gave Supaya Lat a great hold over him, and he did all she asked him. He was a man of good heart; he knew Religion, and that gave him a kind disposition. Had not people around him misled him, there would have been no massacres; he would not have killed any one of his own accord. The King used to read books occasionally. He often received the visits of the Phoongyees, to whom he showed great respect. The afternoons he used to spend in the gardens or in the Palace, talking and laughing with Supaya Lat; he was very fond of her.

With regard to the favourite Yanoung, they tell me that he had been a page of honour in the Palace, and was a great friend of the young Theebaw, who took an oath that if he ever came

to the throne he would make him a prince and a great man. This promise was redeemed. When he induced the King to take several wives, he of course became obnoxious to the Queen. He heard of her dissatisfaction, but he answered, "I can only serve one master, and I serve the King. Since he loves me I do not fear any one!" A generous sentiment which might secure our sympathy if we did not know that he had the laws of Burma at his command, and helped himself to any fair face he saw, sending death to the father or husband who might show a disposition to make a noise. The Queen who appeared to hold him in mortal fear, charged him with plotting against the Government, and the Ministers sustaining the imputation, the King gave an order for his arrest, which was interpreted as an order for his execution and was promptly carried out. The property which he had amassed was large; his jewellery being brought to the Palace, the Queen exclaimed in anger, "Why, he had more splendid things than I have myself!" The story of the scissors satisfied the King at the time; but when he found himself betrayed and ruined in his Palace, last November, he thought of his former favourite, and exclaimed, "If Yanoung had lived, he would have saved me

from this !” He was certainly a man of considerable energy of character, and was outspoken to the point of rashness in his advice to the King. He saw the political danger of the undue latitude given to the Queen, and he told the King that if it were known that she governed the country, people would laugh at him and say that Supaya Lat was King and not Theebaw. In giving this bold counsel he was simply, of course, pronouncing his own doom. The Queen could not pardon him for such plain speaking or for the institution of the four wives. And so he disappeared from the scene very early in the reign.

By all accounts the King was fond of reading in his leisure hours. The Royal Library was well stocked with valuable Pali manuscripts and histories of the Burmese Kingdom. These works were in some danger of being scattered among private purchasers at the sale of prizes in the Palace ; but the Rev. J. A. Colbeck got the attention of the General Commanding, and book sales were stopped. Many of the palm-leaf books are splendidly got up, with gold and vermillion edges and gilt bindings, wrapped up in figured silk cloths. The General’s design is, I believe, to present the

manuscripts to one or more universities at home, where the books will be highly valued, and be at the service of European erudition. Mr. Colback will as soon as possible make a catalogue.

One or two books have got a history. A once dainty volume of religious meditations, and including a sermon of Shin Gaudama, the founder of the Buddhist faith, was picked up the other day. It is a small-sized palm leaf manuscript, partly in Pali; partly with interlinear translation into Burmese, in gold boards. This was a devotional book of the Princess of Maydoo, and bears her name first as Princess, then as Queen in the Burmese era 1194, *i.e.* A.D. 1833. The lady in question must, therefore, have been one of the queens of King Bah Gycedaw, who reigned from 1819 to 1837, and in whose days we made our first entrance in force and took our first share of the Burmese empire. Some later possessor has scored out the lady's name, but it can be read nevertheless.

Another book or series of books describes in picture and footnotes the life and preaching of Shin Gaudama. The Royal artist, Oo-san-da, was ordered by King Mindo-Min to paint scenes in the 550 *sats* or existences of Gaudama. "From the shaving of Wa-tha-ka-ya Pohnna's

head by order of King Nza-tatha :—To—The Preaching to the congregation the advantages of virtue, by the Lord while residing in the monastery which was built in the village of Patulu.”

A proper studio was set apart in the Palace, called the “ Gohn-gan-soung ” ; and the King being greatly interested in the progress of the work, frequently honoured the artist by his presence, troubled him too, perhaps, for it must be awkward to sketch and paint while lying on your stomach in the presence of royalty. But that was not the whole of the poor painter’s distress and difficulty. One day the King was accompanied by a young page of honour—a “ Let-thon-daw ”—and let him be held up to infamy by his title, the Soung-Hlu-Moo. The youngster added to the painter’s distress by nipping him in a tender part, and the poor artist forgetting decorum, majesty, and prudence, picked up the Royal spittoon, and, with a sweep of his hand, brought it smartly down upon the empty cranium of his tormentor. An explosion, tears, and bloodshed, were the immediate consequences. The King started, and was indignant at the insult to his presence ; ordered the poor painter out, and but for the fact of his being a man of genius, and able to procure the powerful intercession of the Burmese

Archbishop^T, would have at once ordered his execution. Oosan-da never finished his pictures, but outlived his Royal master and died only four months ago. His volumes will find their way as picture-books into English nurseries at home and will be shown to little darlings who want to know what papa has brought from the wars, and then inevitably find their way by sure gradations to the all consuming fire.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MEINGOON PRINCE.

The Meingoon Prince at Pondicherry—Mission from Theebaw to the French Governor—The Prince's Followers—His Desire for British Friendship—His Escape to Colombo—The Massacre in the Jail at Mandalay—The Prince's Opinion of Theebaw—His Offer to throw over the French—His Efforts to reach Saigon.

BEFORE the invasion the King and his counselors regarded as their most dangerous enemy, the Meingoon Prince, an aspirant to the throne of King Theebaw, residing in Pondicherry. The conquest and annexation of Burma have sadly interfered with the prospects of this Prince, which were until then regarded as most promising. In October, 1884, Theebaw saw reason to send a mission from Mandalay to Pondicherry to observe the Meingoon Prince and endeavour to come to an understanding with the French in regard to

him. On that occasion I sent one of my staff, Mr. White, to Pondicherry to ascertain the exact purpose of this singular departure from the usual methods of Burmese policy, and form an estimate of the Meingoon's character and pretensions. To Mr. White's notes I am indebted for the following account of this astute and aspiring Prince :—

Pondicherry, which is to the Meingoon Prince his sixth place of refuge since circumstances necessitated his departure from his father's country, has two recommendations. The chief of these is that it is situated on the seacoast, whereby another flitting on his part may be achieved without much difficulty; the second advantage is simply of a negative character—the city is not in English territory. Pondicherry remains from one year's end to another almost as quiet as a city of the dead. A stray visitor is received with as much surprise as if he had dropped from the clouds. No wonder, therefore, that the Burmese Rajah—as the Meingoon Prince is generally termed—created a sensation by bringing into a city where quiet hitherto reigned supreme, a mimic court, with a little host of regular attendants, and towards which others similarly strange in their costume and foreign in their tongue are continually passing. The Prince has

taken up his abode in the European quarter, and his bungalow was equidistant from the sea, and from the fine grove of cocoanut trees which skirts the northern side of the city.

Among the passengers by the train from Madras were two Burmans, one of whom was a minister from the Court of King Theebaw at Mandalay. Since the Prince located himself at Pondicherry, the passage of Burmans to and from Madras—to which port steamers from Rangoon run direct—had been so frequent as to excite comment no longer. On the arrival of the train at Pondicherry it was, however, evident that the exiled Prince expected the agent of the King. As the train passed from the dark cocoanut grove, there was perceived beneath the black and white colonnade of the station a little assemblage of Burmans, in all the brilliant colouring of their national costume. It had become known to the Prince that on his account a mission was on its way to Pondicherry, and that the train of Sunday was to bring an officer of no lesser rank than Oo-Pow-Htoon, the Assistant Secretary for the Foreign Department of the kingdom of Burma. The gathering on the platform was presumably intended as a demonstration of the influence and resources at the command of

the Prince, in the hope that it would be reported in the narrative of the mission for the information of the King. No exhibition of hostility took place towards the King's representative, nor was an opportunity granted for any display of feeling, a guard detailed for the purpose by the French authorities at once assuming charge of the Burmese minister. The demonstration was soon at an end, and mounting a "pushpush"—the only means of conveyance provided in the city—each pair of Burmans urged the coolies to the utmost speed the vehicles permitted.

In the afternoon King Theebaw's representative had an interview with the Acting Governor, the newly-appointed Governor not having yet taken up his residence in India, and on the following morning left for Arconum junction, on his way to Mandalay, by Calcutta, to report the result of his mission. Not until his departure was the guard relaxed, a police sepoy acting as sentry during the night at the minister's hotel.

On paying a visit to the Meingoon Prince a few hours after he had received the news of the presence of the King's representative, Mr. White found him in high spirits at the event. His bungalow is a roomy one in the Rue St. Louis. It is fronted by a spacious compound, and

in this respect differs from neighbouring houses, which are built on the street line. Although the property of the French Government, and the usual residence of the Secretary to the Governor, the Prince occupied it as a regular tenant, and paid rent in the usual course for the three other buildings in which his followers are lodged. Some sixty men had joined him since he was brought back to the French city, mostly young Burmans from Rangoon. Not that his is entirely a youthful following. A venerable and grim-visaged Burman, sword in hand, was pacing backwards and forwards on guard within the lower verandah. Other elders of the Prince's company subsequently made their appearance, but the sentinel's was the only weapon observable.

Of the older men the most notable is Oomho, a Burman, who took part in the Prince's outbreak in Mandalay, and has since been an exile, with his leader, living chiefly in Rangoon. He has been one of the chief instruments of communication with the Prince, whom he frequently visited during his captivity. Now he has altogether taken up his quarters at Pondicherry, and is regarded by the Prince as his Prime-Minister, and by that title he is known. The hero

of the young Burmans is undoubtedly a Mussulman, named, in Burmese, Pho-thin. This youth, whose richly embroidered attire made him a conspicuous figure at the railway station, was brought up in Burma, and went into business as a trader in the rubies found in King Theebaw's mines. Although quite boyish in appearance, Pho-thin has already won his spurs in intrigue. It is to him the Prince owes his escape from Benares into French territory, the young Mussulman having managed for him the whole of the difficult business of disguising and getting him out of the sacred city, where his brother—the Meingoondine Prince—still remains. Of Sepan Ook, the Armenian engineer, who contrived the Prince's later escape from Pondicherry, much has been written in connection with that event, but he has yet to justify his claim to the name of Oonpang, or "flower of success," which has been bestowed upon him. He joined the Prince two years ago, and his knowledge of the European languages has served his leader in good stead.

It is the custom for the men to guard their Prince as he sleeps at night, his adherents dividing themselves into three or four watches for the purpose of ensuring his safety. Outside the

compound one on to police sepoy's stationed, but this was only a temporary measure during the short visit of the King's officer from Mandalay.

An attendant conducted me into the presence of the Prince, who was seated in a large reception-room which runs the full length of the bungalow. A stoutly-built man of medium height, about forty years of age, with a broad countenance, beaming with good-humour, and rotund features, left unmarked notwithstanding all his perilous adventures—such is the Meingoon Prince. His costume was of the ordinary Burmese character, and was without ornament. It consisted of a short white jacket, and a striped *langooti* of the hand-woven material of his native country, and his black hair, wrought in a knot to the crown of the head, was circled with a narrow fillet of fine yellow muslin. There was nothing about his person to distinguish the Prince from his followers; but they approached him in the fashion enforced before the Burmese King—prostrating themselves and moving on hands and knees. Even his interpreters when addressing him remained in a kneeling posture, with the palms of their hands together in an attitude of supplication. The Prince possesses an expression so bland and genial, that it was difficult

to credit such a picture of ineffable good-humour with the crimes history has placed to his account. Could it be true that twenty years ago this Prince rose in rebellion against his father the King, whose escape in disguise from one palace to another alone prevented him from becoming both regicide and patriocide? But in that attack on the royal residence, the War Prince, doubly related to him as his own uncle and the father of his wife, was one of the victims of the Meingoon Prince. Was this the young desperado whose conspiracy against his protectors, whilst in refuge at Rangoon, caused the English Government to deport him to the Andaman Islands?

Lightly referring to any such dark episodes of his young days, the Prince declared he was now a changed man. Speaking in Hindustani the one accomplishment gained during his exile he declared:—"The mistake the English Government have made all along is that they do not know up to this moment the object I have at heart. The Government thinks there has been no change in me during all these twenty years. They forget one cannot remain always a child. I have been telling them for a long time—but my word is not believed—that when I come to the throne I will

show to the English Government, and to all the world, that I am on friendly terms with everyone, and that my object is to keep all my subjects at peace. If I go to war with my neighbours, how can I keep the peace between my subjects !” In illustration of the contrast between the Meingoon Prince of to-day and the ill-regulated individual of twenty years since, he added :—“ It is now just like giving a ruby or a rare gem, to one who has learned its value and knows his. Such a one will know how to deal with it, and will add to its value ; whilst another, who has not learned to understand what a real jewel is, will destroy its lustre and utterly spoil the gem.”

Whilst the Prince asserts that he will make no further attempt to approach the British Government, he is still fully alive to the value of any patronage or countenance that might lend greater freedom of action in endeavouring to realise his aspirations. He prays that the Government of India may withdraw their claims upon him as an escaped prisoner. But he professes himself tired of making hopeless appeals. As soon as he found himself safe at Chaudernagore he sent in a memorial which was a model of brevity, his whole prayer being comprised in four monosyllables—

"Let me go home." To this petition came the answer from Lord Dufferin, "If you will leave French territory and surrender yourself to the British authorities, whatever wishes you present shall be considered."

Nothing daunted, in four or five months the Prince forwarded another memorial in an extended form, assuring the Government that he was desirous of making friendship with them, that he wished to be free to go wherever he wanted, that he would in return for their friendship accept whatever terms they offered, and that he would once more settle all the European traders in Upper Burma. To this no answer was given; and a third attempt to open negotiations, when King Theebaw's ambassadors were sent to France, was alike ineffectual in the end, although the Prince then appealed for permission to send his prime-minister as his representative. Lord Dufferin's name was suggested to him, as a Viceroy who would be unhampered by precedent, and who would be likely to form his own opinion on whatever matter of State came before him. But the Prince shook his head despondently, and exclaimed, "The same was said of Lord Ripon— but all the petitions I sent him were in good faith and he has treated them as worthless." Then tak-

ing up another aspect of the question, the Prince continued, "The fact is the English Government have thrown me away. The French Government have taken me up, and are treating me as if I were a favourite child, with all their kindness and hospitality. When I came here I had only a single servant, now I have four houses and sixty attendants. The French have offered to supply me with money, and as up to this time my subjects in Burma have provided the funds for all my wants, I have answered that whenever necessary I will take it." I suggested to the Prince that notwithstanding this disinterested friendship towards himself, the Government in Paris were showing none the less friendly feeling towards the ambassadors of the King he is desirous to supplant. His pleasant laugh showed that he could rightly estimate the disinterestedness of his French friends.

Although his prospects of escape from Pondicherry are rather nebulous, the Meingoon Prince is very sanguine, and is deeply considering whether he shall make his way towards Mandalay by Saigon or Bangkok. On one point he has at all events made up his mind. "Unless I get a real assurance that I shall not be

detained, how can I surrender myself to the English Government?" As he asked the question he glanced through the window towards the sea-shore, fifty yards away, where the waves of the bay were breaking on the white sands. It was clear that to him this is the favoured way towards the fulfilment of his hopes, for which he is willing to risk his head.

Yet the Prince has no reason so far to be grateful to the "watery waves." If his fellow-passengers may be trusted, he is a sea-sick Prince, and it was to the weakness of his stomach rather than to any defect in his plans, that his recent attempt at escape landed him on French territory in India instead of in Cochin-China. Having been successfully smuggled out of Chandernagore, the Prince was well on his way to Colombo when the monsoon weather in the Bay of Bengal numbered him among its victims. Completely prostrated by illness, an appeal was made to the captain of the vessel to shift him from the third-class into the saloon. The money for the transfer was asked for, and in his misery the third-class passenger declared himself a Prince, and offered to give a chit on one of his supporters for the sum required. He was put into more comfortable quar-

ters, but at Colombo a telegram had announced his escape, and instead of being permitted to proceed eastwards he was returned to India.

Nevertheless he is determined to make one more attempt to enter Burma, and fearing British influence might bar his passage through Siam, he is fixing his eyes on the more distant Saigon. So far as Pondicherry is concerned, the Prince thinks himself free to leave whenever he chooses. It is true no semblance of a guard is ordinarily placed upon him, but the supreme authorities in France would without doubt be appealed to on the first hint of the Prince's departure. He states that he is only waiting for the critical moment to arrive, and that he has only to put himself at the head of the people to ensure success. "It is a fact," said he, "that King Theebaw is detested. I am his elder brother, and the legitimate heir. I bear no ill-will to him nor to the Queen. Theebaw is my younger brother, and his wife is my sister." The relationship thus referred to by the Prince is a relationship in blood as well as in law. As was the custom of the Incas of Peru, the Queen of Burma distinguished by being selected from the sisters of the reigning monarch. This custom has, too, an important bearing on the claim

to the throne put forward by the Meingoon Prince, King Theebaw not only professing to occupy the throne in accordance with the will of his father, with whom its disposal rested, but denying to the Prince any right to the kingdom, on the ground that he is not of the pure royal blood on both sides, required in a monarch of Burma.

Of his adherents in his brother's kingdom, the Meingoon Prince speaks vaguely, but with confidence. He repudiates being in any way responsible for the gaol outbreak in Mandalay, which was the occasion or the pretext of a massacre. When asked whether it was not a fact that some of his friends were among the prisoners, he parried the question "I have," he said, "friends both within and without the gaol."

For the last five years, the Prince said, all the outbreaks among the Shans had been in his behalf, although they had been provoked by unjust treatment, for which he did not blame his brother, the Queen having all the power. The Prince was well supplied with the newspapers containing any references to himself, and by his orders a batch from Rangoon was produced. He pointed out, as an illustration of the progress his cause was making, that a Rangoon paper was strongly

urging the British Government to make terms with him, as a substitute for the ruling sovereign. On this the Prince explained that his idea of friendship was for each party to an alliance to make use of the other. When asked when an opportunity for action would next present itself, he replied with a devout gesture "God knows."

The interview had opened with the observance of a Burmese custom. An attendant laid between us a number of cigars, and Burmese etiquette required that the visitor should "light up" before his host. As I retired, says the interviewer, the Meingoon Prince accompanied me to the top of the steps, some thirty of his attendance dragging their prostrate forms along the terrace behind us. It was a painful spectacle, and at the same time as grotesque as any thing in the demon opening to a Drury Lane pantomime.

At the end of December Colonel Sladen received a letter from the Meingoon Prince saying that he would have nothing to do with the French, provided he were assisted to the throne of Burma.

No notice was taken of this communication.

History repeats itself rather tediously in the case of the Meingoon Prince. For a second time he made his way in February to Colombo

on board a French steamer the *Tibre*. And he has had to return whence he came, much depressed, and, it is to be feared, very sea-sick. When he asked the commander of the *Tibre*, in which he had been brought from Pondicherry to the harbour of Colombo, to put him on board the French steamship *China* bound for Saigon, the request was refused. The grounds for the refusal are not stated. Probably the French captain did not like to have any part in a transaction which might be distasteful to the British authorities. But he suggested that the Prince might get on board the *China* by a port-boat, or by a native boat. This course was apparently considered dangerous. Once on board a boat under the British flag in British waters, the Prince might find himself once more a prisoner. So he decided to return to Pondicherry in the *Tibre*, and he has reached that place, and gone back to his old quarters there. We hear that just before his departure on this luckless trip, he spoke very freely to visitors about the turn things had taken in Burma. He approved of the deposition of Theebaw, who was, he considered, unfit to be King. As for the British, he was not unfriendly to them. If he had come to the throne instead of Theebaw, things would have gone

differently. The English might have come to Mandalay, if he ruled, sooner than they did with Theebaw, if they had liked to do so ; they would have been welcome to him as friends and allies. Theebaw did not understand how to govern the country, and it was well he was removed. The Prince spoke of going to reside in Saigon, and said that he was waiting for a communication from the French authorities. The communication which he seemed to expect was a passport, which he would, he said, get as a matter of course, for he was not a prisoner, never having done anything against the French. This Prince will probably be heard of again, for he has a great deal of vivacity and energy, though hitherto he has not contrived to bring any of his undertakings to a satisfactory issue.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DEPORTATION OF THE
TYNDAL.

The Arrest of the Tyndah at the Council—His Sinister Reputation—His Services to the British at the close of the War—The Policy of Employing him to Re-constitute the Burmese State—The Prejudices against him and their Grounds—Theebaw's Declaration with regard to the Massacres—Supaya Lat and the Kin-woon Meingyee—The Expedition at Ava—The Surrender of Theebaw—The Difficulties of the Situation—Mr. Bernard's View—He Arrests the Tyndah and sends him to Rangoon—Received with Consideration by the Viceroy.

THE arrest of the Tyndah at the Hlootdaw was an event which electrified Maudalay on the evening of the 27th December. No one had the least idea that anything of the kind was in contemplation. Since the occupation of the city the Tyndah and the other ministers had met daily in the Hlootdaw Pavilion, close to the Hall of the Golden Throne, in view of all who are

permitted to enter the precincts of the Palace. Colonel Sladen generally was present at their deliberations, and presided. He had come to Mandalay, fully sharing the general belief in the exceptional villainy of Theebaw's Minister of War, and was quite prepared to execute him, if need be. His intention was to do the best he could with the Kinwoon Meingycc.

But on nearer approach it was found that the popular belief in regard to the exceptional atrocity of the Tyndah was based mainly on rumour, and a little on prejudice. It was not possible to obtain any evidence to show that the War Minister had been more guilty in regard to the massacres than his colleagues. But apart from the past history of the Tyndah there were considerations which seemed under the actual circumstances to be of more importance, and to mark him out as a man whose services in preserving some semblance of organization in the country might be of value. It became evident that for certain good reasons the Tyndah was no longer "the king's man," and that there were motives of the weightiest kind by which he was influenced for his own personal safety to

cast in his lot unreservedly with us. He possessed undoubted influence and authority, which might be used either for or against us. The necessities of his position had already obliged him to act in our interest, rather than in that of his master.

When Theebaw was peremptorily dethroned and deported, the fabric of government fell in ; it was necessary to organize a provisional government of some kind to take its place, and the Tyndah being in a position to give useful aid, and the Kinwoon Mcingyeo having at the last moment gone down the river with Theebaw, Colonel Sladen decided to employ him, while watching him closely. He did good service for his new masters, and no imputation is made upon him in regard to his acts or his attitude during the month he was in office. Nevertheless Mr. Bernard, the Chief Commissioner, with very general approval, removed him from office without an instant's warning, had him arrested in sight of his astounded colleagues, in front of the Palace, and sent him straight on board a steamer under an escort of British soldiers. The event was so sudden and striking, that it had all the effect

of a *coup d'état*, and created an immense sensation in Mandalay. It created an equally profound impression in Lower Burma and in India, whither the Tyndah was sent to spend some time in exile.

. The reasons which are assigned by Mr. Bernard for this unexpected and vigorous assertion of supreme authority are certainly of great weight, and will probably be accepted as justifying his action. Unquestionably the feeling in Mandalay among the Europeans is one of satisfaction—a satisfaction fully shared by the Burmese themselves. In order that the situation can be understood, and that the public, while approving of the Commissioner's action, may do justice to the grounds on which Colonel Sladen decided to utilise the services of the Tyndah in spite of his unpopularity, and the odium which rightly or wrongly attached to his name, it will be as well to put the events connected with the ex-Minister of War's later career in their true perspective.

Tyndah Meingyee is a soldier, and served for many years before obtaining civil or administrative employment. The title in question denotes that the revenues of the town of Tyndah have been assigned to him as the recompense of services.

He is in Burmese phrase "the father of the revenues" of Tyndah. He himself admits, or rather boasts, that he is illiterate, and only knows the routine business to which he has been accustomed. Nevertheless he possesses great tact, and even a certain genius for affairs. He was one of the only two men in the King's court who was possessed of talent and some force of character. The Kinwoon Meingyee was his rival; with whom, however, he kept up on the whole satisfactorily relations, based on mutual interests. The one possessed the confidence more or less of the outside public, and was known to be a man of some education, who had visited Europe, and was believed to be a well-intentioned and able man. The other was the rough soldier, who knew how to stand well at the Palace, especially with Queen Supaya Lat and her mother; he was head of the army; his son commanded the Palace Guards; he played with the royal children; he was, besides, the man of action, to whom the King was said to owe his throne. When anyone became obnoxious to the King or to the Queen, it was understood that the Tyndah was the man to undertake the duty of disposing of him. He was therefore regarded with more fear than love, and his reputation was that of a man who would

shrink from nothing, and who urged on the royal pair to enormities which would perhaps never have occurred to their unassisted intelligence.

But it is now almost certain that the grim old minister was somewhat the victim of prejudice. I have it on the authority of Princesses of King Mindo-Min's family that the Tyndah, though a terrible man at times, exerted his influence to save many persons from ruin and sudden death. He was always ready to oblige the King, and more particularly the Queen, and he never refused point blank to put out of the way any one designated to him for the purpose. But in many cases he suggested delays, and in some he found means to convey a hint to the destined victim to go into hiding, trusting to forgetfulness or a change of view on the part of his sovereign, or rather on that of Supaya Lat.

It seems certain that the order for the execution of the remaining members of Mindo-Min's family was renewed more than once; the delays and the difficulties interposed by the ministers, of whom the Tyndah was certainly the most considerable, averted their doom. As for the Tyndah's part in the great massacres, no evidence has been found, since the expedition arrived

at Mandalay, to sustain the allegation that he had more to do with the dread business than any of the other ministers. The evidence was sought for, especially by Mr. Bernard, but it was not found. The whole system of the Hloodaw was that of Cabinet responsibility; the danger of one-man-power was effectually guarded against, so far as individual ministers were concerned; all should concur before any measure was ordered. It would be perilous, and something more, for any one minister to carry out a plan of his own, or to recommend any grave step to the King which had not received the sanction and support of his colleagues. If things went wrong he would be in great jeopardy; as we shall see presently it is deemed impossible in Burma to confine the expression of displeasure to simple dismissal; dismissal necessarily involves death or exile. Under the late Government dismissal would be supplemented by death. The Tyndah regarded the order for his removal from the Council issued by Mr. Bernard as naturally implying a sentence of death; he could not believe that exile alone would be regarded as sufficient. No individual minister would, under the late regime, have ventured to take a personal initiative in the

slaughter of the King's relatives. The initiative was taken by Supaya Lat's mother, and by the resolute and unfaltering queen-consort herself. There seems no reason to doubt that the massacres were resolved upon and carried out by the Hlootdaw as a measure of State policy, in accordance with Burmese traditions and practice. The deed was done at the instigation of the two queens, whose own lives were at stake for their part in the poisoning, real or suspected, of King Mindo-Min.

The ex-King declares, and his always asseverated, that he knew nothing of the murder of his brothers, to whom he had pledged himself that he would not, if he came to the throne, carry out the old custom, and that he had received the same pledge from them in case any of them and not himself became King. He asserts that he was so shocked when he heard of what had been done, that he informed the ministers that he would not sit on the throne, but would retire to a monastery, and he actually wore the monk's dress for seven months. The ministers, he said, and he especially named the Kinwoon Meingyee, told him that what had been done was necessary to prevent a civil war, which would have caused great loss of life; that the same course had

always been taken in Burma for the same object; that the whole responsibility and blame would fall on the shoulders of the ministers, and not on his, as he was not concerned in it. This version of the affair may be completed by adding that it is generally believed that the ministers, in deciding on the massacre, were inspired not only by high reasons of State policy, but by the frantic vehemence with which Supaya Lat and her mother urged the necessity of sacrificing the relatives of Theebaw. They conceived that their own lives and that of the King were at stake, so long as the usual precaution was not taken; and it was taken. There is absolutely no evidence to fix the crime in any especial manner upon the Tyndah. He was one of the Council, and he took his share of the responsibility. The justification, which was subsequently put forward when concealment was found impossible, was that of the Kinwoon Meingyee, who pleaded State necessity, and cited precedents. He does not appear to have suffered much, if at all, in public opinion from his complicity in the tragedy, or from his deliberate justification of it. He enjoyed throughout a considerable share of the royal favour, and retains still a large measure of public confidence in Burma. He is

now coming up to Mandalay to take his seat in the Council of ministers, where that of the Tyndah will be conspicuous by its absence.

The collapse of King Thecbaw's ill-compacted power was brought about so suddenly, and was so complete and unexpected, that the exposition of the direct causes of the catastrophe possesses considerable interest. As I have mentioned, the Kinwoon Meingyee and the Minister of War were rivals in position and authority, though they frequently worked in a sort of harmony in order to circumvent hostile influences. The Kinwoon Meingyee, having visited England, had arrived at the conclusion that it would be impossible for Burma to fight our power; that there was no parity of strength, and that it would be wise to avoid doing anything that might lead to a collision. When differences arose in the early part of the year he urged that concessions should be made, and deprecated any resort to hostile measures, which could only lead to disaster.

Queen Supaya Lat was so indignant at this want of public spirit on the part of the Kinwoon, that she exclaimed angrily, "Dress

that minister in an old woman's clothes ! He is not a man but a miserable old woman !" The Tyndah felt that it would never do for the Minister of War to incur the scorn of the Queen, and be dressed in an old woman's clothes. He spoke confidently of the might of Burma, and declared that he was able to give a good account of the English if they dared to come. This language obtained for the valorous soldier the ear of their Majesties, who were mightily pleased to hear that they need not fear the Government of India, or England, or any Power in the world. Burma was still great and formidable, and would not yield a jot on any point at issue. It is believed that the Tyndah himself may have been in part at least the dupe of his own ignorance, when leading the King straight to the edge of the precipice. He knew nothing personally of the military resources ready to the hand of the Government of India. He believed that his muzzle-loading cannon, antiquated and ill-served as it was, would prove more than a match for any that could be sent against it, and he may have looked upon his ragamuffin army as equal to any body of troops in the world. For the time being he enjoyed great

reputation at the Court of Mandalay. The Kinwoon Meingyee fell into disgrace, and his prudent counsels were not listened to.

The Minister of War did not himself, however, really believe in the imminence of war. He made no preparations of any magnitude, and the measures taken were perfunctory and contemptible. A number of iron swords with tin sheaths were manufactured, and two Italian Engineers were directed to provide for the defences of the river, but no materials adequate for the purpose were given to them. The English ultimatum was explained away, or even concealed from the King, who was kept in a fool's paradise. The expedition moved forward, and the situation became appalling. The Jingo War Minister, who had played the part of a Burmese Leboeuf, was on the point of being found out. His head was at stake; the English were moving on Mandalay, and there were no means of stopping them; if once the King, and above all Supaya Lat, who never trifled when the interests of the monarchy were concerned; came to know the truth, the game was up. The first thing to do was to take care that their Majesties did not come to know the danger of the situation. They were not told of the advance of the expedition. When the

fight took place at Minelah, it was announced that the Burmese had gained a victory, and captured three steamers, which were on their way to Mandalay. This important news was actually proclaimed through the streets of the capital by beat of drums, while the English were nearing Ava. There were troops and posts and a barrier of sunken steamers and other craft, at this point, but the Tyndah knew too well that they could offer no effectual resistance.

The War Minister's Burmese diplomacy and presence of mind enabled him to save himself, even when things were at this pass. He made up matters with the Kinwoon Meingyee, who had begun to recover his credit as a peace-minister when affairs were suspected to be growing serious. The worst was still concealed from the King, who was told that the English force was not coming to make war, but to escort Colonel Sladen to negotiate a peace with His Majesty direct; and he was advised to remain in Mandalay. He was informed that he could without difficulty explain matters and arrange a treaty which would give the English new conditions and satisfy them. They would then go away with the treaty, and the King would remain in his Palace as before. Theebaw appears

to have hesitated. He had already given orders to load fifty elephants and two hundred ponies with treasure and other baggage, so that he might retire into the Shan country. The danger to the Lyndah, if this project was carried out, was obvious enough. If the King escaped and realised what had happened—that the English force had passed almost unopposed through the country, while the fact was concealed from the court; that the capital and the Palace were occupied, and that the monarchy had disappeared without a blow being struck in its defence, the fate of the Minister of War could not be doubtful. In the crisis there was one thing clear, that the King must not be allowed to know all. Access to the Palace was regulated by the Minister's son, the Commandant of the Royal Guards. No one was allowed to see the King or tell him how things really stood. The Kinwoon Meingyee agreed that flight to the Shan country promised ill; that under the circumstances the best course might be to surrender to the English, submit to their conditions, and allow them to put the King back upon the throne as a vassal, and go their ways. Both ministers now impressed this upon Theebaw; they represented to him that, if he fought,

he would probably be beaten, and he would lose his throne ; the English had come to get a treaty ; throw open the Palace to them, negotiate with them personally ; give them the treaty, and they would return to Rangoon.

After some persuasion the two ministers induced the King to consent to the expedition being allowed to pass the Ava forts, and a letter was despatched to General Prendergast proposing an armistice in order to negotiate a peace. The letter complained that the military expedition had been sent on without leaving a reasonable time for discussion. And it was naively added that although in words the ultimatum had been rejected, the tone of the Burmese communication showed that when 'no' was verbally uttered, it was the intention to say 'yes.' This letter was not signed ; the official usage of the Burman government was to put no name at the end of a royal document ; probably it was considered derogatory for the sovereign to affix his signature, and it would have been presumption for a minister to put his name on a notification presumably emanating from the King. The practice is to send a despatch by an ordinary messenger ; a confidential agent following to explain its origin and real meaning. No local

functionary acted upon a royal order sent to him until the confidential agent arrived subsequently, to make its meaning clear. Probably the difficulty which ordinary persons find in understanding the high and dry official Burmese of Court documents has led to this habit of waiting for an explanation of the royal intentions before proceeding to carry out the "royal order."

The military authorities may be excused for not understanding the peculiarities of Burmese official usage. The fact that the document was not signed was pointed out to Colonel Sladen as conclusive as to the worthlessness of the offer to submit to the terms which the British might impose. Colonel Sladen said that had the letter been signed he would have known it to be unofficial and worthless, but that it was unsigned in accordance with Burmese etiquette. Nevertheless the letter was regarded as a hoax, and the envoys would probably have been kicked over the ship's side, but for the insistence of Colonel Sladen that it was a genuine document and meant surrender. A delay was reluctantly granted, for all the army was eager for a fight. After an interchange of letters the order came by telegraph from the King to his forces to lay down

their arms and let the English pass without resistance. Had a fight taken place at Ava, there would have been further fighting at Mandalay, and the capital, which is a mere match-box, would have probably been burned to the ground, palace and all; the King would certainly have carried out his intention of flying to the Shan territory, and a long and tedious and bloody guerilla war would probably have been the result.

As things turned out the Minister of War's policy prevailed; the English were able to come unopposed past Ava; the army was disarmed, the King captured, and sent to India. The head of the General-in-Chief, for a time in such jeopardy, was at length safe, and we could see what was best to be done for Burma, now rid of Theebaw. So far as our interests were considered, the action of the Tyndah throughout this business was most useful. But while Theebaw was still in the Palace, and not yet a prisoner under a guard, the Minister of War made it abundantly clear to Colonel Sladen that his allegiance to the King had been thrown off for good and all, and that he understood perfectly well that for himself and for Burma he had best concert with the English and let Theebaw

take care of himself. He awoke the Colonel in the early morning, and informed him that there was great confusion in the Palace, and that the King was apparently preparing to leave. This was found to be the case, and Colonel Sladen had to reassure the King and to secure his safety sent for a guard. The King thus became a prisoner of war in his own Palace. The value of the adhesion of a man of so much personal influence as the War Minister, the most feared of all the ministers, was not to be denied. With Theebaw the whole fabric of Burmese administration had fallen; the army was disarmed and disbanded; the eight or ten Burmese steamers were captured; the police were dispersed; there was no centre of administration. The necessity of creating some kind of provisional government was manifest and pressing. The Kinwoon Meingyee, at the instance of the King, who made a personal appeal to him at the last moment, accompanied his sovereign in the steamer which was to take him to Rangoon. Of the members who remained the Tyndah was the only one of any weight. If he was on the side of the new government he could do great service in averting anarchy; if he were sent away there was no one to supply his place. Colonel Sladen

determined to make use of him, having first ascertained that the points in regard to antecedent events were as I have indicated above.

On the principle that the workman had best use the instruments he finds ready to his hand, Colonel Sladen's resolve to avail himself of such services as the ex-Minister of War could render, will probably be held to be justified by the circumstances. The greater portion of Independent Burma still remains outside the line of the British advance, and beyond the immediate reach of the small detachments holding positions on the banks of the Irrawady. The difficulty of restoring order and some kind of local government throughout the territory as a whole has therefore been very great; for, as I have said, the Burmese army and navy and finance ceased to exist in the last three days of November. The Hlootdaw, acting as a provincial government, has nevertheless been successful in inducing the great bulk of the wouns, or governors of districts, and of the headmen of the villages either to accept their positions as subordinates of the government or else to give place to successors appointed from Mandalay. This is the first step towards re-constituting a civil administration and a police force, and it has been on the whole successfully.

taken. There is no doubt that the influence of the Tyndah has largely contributed to the measure of success so far attained.

Nevertheless it must be allowed that the appointment of the Tyndah with the load of suspicion which was attached to his name was a great shock to public opinion alike in Upper and in Lower Burma. He was regarded very generally as a consummate villain, and by the Burmese—if there be any—who sympathise with Theebaw in his misfortunes he is held to be a traitor who led directly to his deposition and exile. The Chief Commissioner fully shared what must be held to be the general opinion that a man to whom so much ignominy attached ought not to continue a member of the Government. The step which he has taken will probably be popular to a degree. At all events there is no room for doubt as to the thoroughness and energy with which the removal from office and the deportation from the country were effected once the decision to have done with the Tyndah was arrived at.

In secrecy, suddenness, and in the imposing character of the scene selected—the precincts of the Council Chamber and of the Golden Throne in the grand pavilion, through whose gilded pillars

the Throne is visible—gave to the event the impressiveness of a *coup d'état*. Colonel Sladen, who was informed of what was about to be effected, expressed his reasons for declining to concur, and embodied them in a memorandum, which Mr. Bernard promised should be submitted to the Viceroy. He considers that it was wrong to disregard undoubted services rendered to our administration, when there were no new grounds of complaints or suspicion, and points out that there was no evidence whatever to substantiate the allegations that the Tyndah was in some especial manner the perpetrator of the massacres. The Political Officer begged to be excused from the duty of himself arresting the minister, of whose conduct as a colleague he had no reason to complain, and with whose services he was on the whole well satisfied.

Mr. Bernard said he quite understood Colonel Sladen's point of view, and he sympathised with him. But it was deemed advisable that the Tyndah should be removed from the ministry, and under the circumstances he must also be removed from the country.

Mr. Pilcher then proceeded to the Hlootdaw when the Council was still sitting, it being about 5 o'clock in the afternoon. He handed a note to

the Tyndah from the Colonel Sladen, stating that the Chief Commissioner wished to make a communication to him. The Tyndah went out with Mr. Piloher, neither he nor the other ministers having the faintest idea of what was about to happen. Brought to Mr. Bernard's quarters close at hand he was informed that it had been considered undesirable that he should remain a member of the Council, seeing that his name was in general estimation connected with certain deplorable events attendant on the accession of the ex-King to the throne. As he was a man of great influence and personal authority, there was ground to suppose that he might, if not in the ministry, be tempted to use his influence in a sense adverse to it. Therefore his deportation to Rangoon or India for a time must be simultaneous with his removal from the Government. He was not to regard that as a punishment but as a precaution. The Government would treat him well. The Tyndah was quite terrified by the communication made him by the Chief Commissioner. "Spare my life!" he said, "Spare my life! Do not kill me!" The Commissioner assured him with every kindness that he would be well treated; his past offences would not be looked into, so far he could promise that, and in

no case would his life be in danger ; he would go to India, and it was the intention to allow him Rs 250 a month and treat him with consideration. He would be detained in India for political purposes for two years. He was informed that a guard of soldiers of Hampshire Regiment with an officer were in readiness ; that he would be sent in a carriage at once on board a Government steamer, and on the following morning he would proceed to Rangoon.

So said so done. At half-past 5 I was driving to the Palace when I had to stand aside to allow the escort and the vehicle carrying the Tyndah and his fortunes to pass on towards the steamer. It was just outside the city walls, and was, therefore, a likely place for a summary execution. The Tyndah thought his last moment was come, and he said to Mr. Forde, " This is the place in which you are going to kill me. Alas ! Spare my life ! Spare my life ! " Mr. Forde tried to reassure him, telling him that he would be taken on board the steamer and sent in safely to India.

In the Palace the other ministers were found in anxious consultation. They did not conceal their fear that they would all find themselves arrested and deported without warning. Con-

sternation was depicted on their faces. They were, however, positively informed that they had no ground for apprehension ; that no one but the Tyndah would be deported, and he only for the special reasons assigned. But they were far from putting faith in this assurance, and a general stampede of officers was feared. The Ministers said to Colonel Sladen, " When the Tyndah gets to Rangoon he will say ' I only did what the rest did ; why don't you deport them too ! ' And then we shall be arrested and sent to India ? " A guard was put on the Tyndah's house simultaneously with his arrest. He was not even allowed to go home to say good-bye to his wife and daughter and to get his clothes, or the like, lest he should take opportunity to create mischief. But three boxes of money were sent after him to the steamer. He is said to be very rich.

The next day the excitement caused by this remarkable incident was increased by the news that the remainder of the ladies of King Mindo-Min's family had been ordered to go down in the same steamer leaving that morning for Rangoon. Nyongyan's sister and mother being amongst the number.

Just outside the city walls, I was the involuntary cause of a stoppage. Proceeding to the Palace, my

bullock cart had to get out of the ruts to make way for the vehicle conveying the ex-War Minister with Mr. Ford. The delay just outside the walls suggested to the experience of the Tyndah that he was to be there and then despatched. He said to Mr. Forde, "You are going to kill me here! Alas! Spare my life! Do not kill me!" The declarations of Mr. Forde that there was no question of putting him to death and that he would be put safely on board the steamer were received doubtfully. It is the Burmese practice, almost invariably, to make kindly assurances of that kind when death is intended, so as to spare the feelings of the victim, and give him a sense of false security which induces submission.

The Tyndah found on his arrival at Calcutta that his apprehensions were ill-founded. Lord Dufferin received him and treated him with consideration, holding that it was not necessary to make inquisition into the past; the more especially since no evidence was forthcoming that the War Minister was more directly culpable in regard to the slaughter of King Mindoo-Min's family than any other member of the Hlootdaw.

He was informed that when order is re-established in Burma, the Government will permit him to return to Mandalay and live there.

The Hlootdaw a little later on sent a memorial to the Viceroy asking for the reinstatement of the Tyndah, and generally declaring that the rest of the Council were equally responsible with him for the acts which were attributed exclusively to him, and were the ground of his removal from the Government and deportation to India. The Hlootdaw had also asked and obtained the reinstatement of the Kinwoon Mcingyee as a member of the Council. It is worth noting that an address, signed by twenty-nine European and foreign residents at Mandalay, presented to the Kinwoon on his return to Mandalay, respectfully tendering him their thanks for his persistent exertions on their behalf during the late war. This may be regarded as an oblique censure on the Tyndah, who has been always suspected of a design to bring about the massacre of the European community. There is no proof of any such intention on his part; had he entertained it, there could have been no difficulty in carrying it into execution. It is, I think, indisputable that his influence amongst the more turbulent spirits of Burma and his long experience in managing

them would be of great practical service in the work of reorganising the civil administration. But the reinstatement of the Tyndah would be resented by the Europeans and by a large section of the Burmeso. Apart from this the Government will hesitate before admitting that he of all others is an indispensable man. The audience given by the Viceroy to the deported minister and the recognition of his claim to consideration on the ground of the services he had rendered to our force, and subsequently by holding the dacoits back at a critical time, will be regarded as an implied sanction of the course which Colonel Sladen took in employing him and utilising his aptitudes for Burmese business on the reconstituted Hlootdaw. The memorial of the Hlootdaw claiming an equal responsibility with him in regard to the "removal" of the Princes and Princesses, and asking for his return and reinstatement are incidents which point in the same direction. All the same, Mr. Bernard had on his side good reason for his action in removing the Tyndah from office and sending him to India. The Viceroy practically approved of the course the Chief Commissioner deemed necessary in deference to political appearances when sanction was accorded to the summary dismissal and deportation of a statesman with so

sinister a reputation. But the practical effect of that step was the immediate development of the extent and intensity of the movement which is still termed dacoity, but is really an effort to resist the conquest. In December dacoity was mostly confined to the raids of villages for rice or other food ; before the close of the month the whole aspect of things had changed, and the villages began to organise in groups, under leaders, to carry on operations against the detachments sent out from the military posts, and even to harass the little garrisons by firing at the sentries at night.

CHAPTER. XV.

THE MEASURES OF REPRESSION.

The Doctrine of Wholesome Severity—The Practical Effect—Whole Country not occupied by the Military—Mr. Martini's Adventure—Scepticism as to the Result of Executions—Bonaparte's Failure in Egypt—Demoralising Influence on those Employed—Plots and Counterplots—Extorting Evidence by Terror—Photographing Executions—General Indignation—Mr. Colbeck's Protest—Another Side of the Question—The Burmese and their Eye for the Grotesque—Disregard for Death when it is Inevitable—An Expedition against Dacoits—An Officer Wounded—Burmese Police.

IN British Burma there has been prevailing impression that the growth of dacoity is due to the want of wholesome severity in dealing with the dacoits. If we look at the matter from the Burmese point of view, we shall not be so prompt to come to this conclusion. A few weeks after the occupation of Mandalay, there were indications of a tendency to carry matters with a very high-hand indeed, and with a complete disregard of Burmese susceptibilities. I have alluded to instances which strengthen this impression. Even at Mandalay the presence of Mr. Bernard and

Colonel Sladen had not sufficed to prevent displays of overzeal which were calculated to work great mischief.

The political officers are regarded by the military, as is usual in such circumstances, as far too lenient. They require some evidence of actual dacoity with fire arms, and for simple theft a flogging is inflicted instead of death. Making prisoners is therefore regarded as a mistake, and dacoits are in most cases shot out of hand when taken. This is supposed to be not only the right but the merciful course ; it is defended also as the least troublesome, for the care of prisoners, where there is no prison accommodation, is irksome to the soldiers. But it is open to question whether the shooting of men by the half-dozen or the dozen in the belief that they are dacoits, has the soothing and reassuring effect on the villagers that is taken for granted, when speaking of the policy of these retributive acts. It was a matter of common observation amongst military men and civilians alike that dacoity was becoming more general and more dangerous in January than it had been two or three weeks previously, before the shootings and floggings became so general.

The fear of the dacoits throughout the districts was certainly spreading and not diminishing,

as it ought to have been if unsparing military executions are the one remedy. Society had been broken up by the sudden disappearance of the old government, bad as it was, and nothing replaced it so far as the greater part of the surface of the country is concerned. A detachment sent out from the post above Pāgan in December came upon a large village where dacoits and cultivators—in fact, the great bulk of the dacoits now consist of the ordinary village population—were mixed up. The villagers explained that they would have been looted if they had not paid a dacoit leader to protect them; he had done so, and nothing had happened to them. What else were they to do, they asked, for there was now no Government to apply to for protection?

Military stations secure us the line of communication up the great river to Mandalay, but it cannot be pretended that these hold or occupy the immense country in the interior, west or east; the villagers are driven by the general anarchy to make incursions against their neighbours, lest they be themselves raided and robbed. The shooting of a dozen dacoits, who are for the most part villagers, it must be borne in mind, seems to be regarded as a misfortune for the

immediate victims ; but it is not a reason just at present for refusing to dacoit. It is rather a reason for leaving the villages, and taking to the jungle, where small detachments of troops cannot go. This was actually taking place throughout the country at the end of December, and in January.'

For one thing the dacoits, while getting bolder in the way of night attacks, are also getting more difficult to come up, with when detachments are sent after them. A detachment of fifty men was sent out from Pagan, Mr. Martini, a very energetic police superintendent, and another civilian accompanying it. No dacoits were found in the village designated, and the men were sent back. Mr. Martini and his companion rode into another village, and there found a hundred dacoits well armed. One Burman levelled his gun at the police officer ; another claimed the privilege of shooting him and his companion. Fortunately one of the pair in peril—Martini—knew the Burmese language, and he asked a man of intelligence, who appeared to be in authority, what would be gained by killing two men who had done no harm. Discussion, once begun, resulted in the two officers being allowed the opportunity to remount, and they galloped for

their lives. A detachment has been sent out again after this band of dacoits, but has not yet found them.

One grows sceptical as to the tranquillizing effect of military executions on the general population, the greater part of which is wholly beyond the reach of these small detachments. Experience seems to show that where there is a refuge at hand—mountains, as in Afghanistan, deserts, as in the Egypt and the Soudan—an excited population will be exasperated rather than intimidated by military executions which cannot reach those who get out of the way for the moment, and revolve projects of vengeance. Bonaparte, when in military possession of Egypt, had great faith in the efficacy of strong measures. He constantly boasted that he beheaded half-a-dozen “Turks” every morning, as they could only be kept down by severity. And the half-dozen a day were only those slaughtered in the capital; the officers in the country were constantly urged to severity; and as a matter of fact they did not need much urging. Bonaparte and his staff were neither in Egypt nor elsewhere ever obnoxious to the damning charge of philanthropy, or sentimental humanity. But the result was not quite what was expected. The Egyptians,

limp and spiritless as they were, were constantly breaking out in 'insurrections which harassed the troops, and rendered their position precarious, even before the arrival of the English delivering force. Then it was found that the French had not established any hold whatever on the affections of the inhabitants, and the fabric which Bonaparte had hoped to cement with blood, disappeared for ever.

A practical philosopher might do great service to mankind by ascertaining and defining the principles under which terror can be depended upon as a force, and at what point it ceases to intimidate and sets up a reaction. The hanging judges of the past day believed firmly in the repressive influence of the gallows, when freely used, but when Bentham and Romilly and other sceptics examined the problem from a utilitarian point of view, it was found that too much rope was a mistake, and merely brutalised judges and criminals alike. A certain amount of severity has its undoubted use, but a little more than a little, produces, not submission, but familiarity with the last terrors. General Skobeleff, whose sagacious mind took a detached view of every question, held that of the two it was better to slay men, women, and children on the day of

battle than to resort to execution in cold-blood afterwards, for the former measure was regarded as the accident of the fight, and left no after rancour, while the other system produced a settled malignity in the minds of the subjugated population. Another authority, Shakespeare, declared that "cruelty and lenity never played for a kingdom but that the gentler gamester proved the winner." Probably the gentler gamester would find time to make up for his deficiency in rigour by making the vanquished sensible that it was to their interest to have him to rule over them. It must be difficult to impress upon a population which sees death dealt around daily in their midst, that they are in the hands of friends.

Whatever opinion may be formed as to the effect of unsparing and long continued severity on the population which it is intended to subdue, there can be no doubt that those who are employed in applying the remedy are insensibly led into acts which are compromising to themselves and to the Government they serve. The idea fades out that the population which has to be brought into subjection by terror, has any claim whatever to be regarded as possessing human rights. The one virtue is to inspire

fear, and anything not calculated to produce that effect is regarded, and really is, when it is considered from the point of view which is accepted as the right one, as an evidence of weakness, which will interfere with the effect to be produced. I am sorry to adduce the names of gallant and honest officers in this connection, but inasmuch as they have been already published to the world, it would be useless to seek now to suppress them. I shall, therefore, give the succinct narrative of two incidents that occurred in Mandalay in the middle of January as an illustration of what may be taken as an axiom that all things are possible, when the usual procedure of justice is cast aside as an encumbrance.

Any one who understands Mandalay will be prepared to hear of an endless succession of plots and counter-plots, real and pretended. No one need be in the least surprised to hear of scares now, or at any time. Colonel Sladen has been solemnly assured on the most unimpeachable testimony that this or that minister or great man is plotting his assassination, or the sudden overthrow of the British Government in Mandalay. Some of the so-called plots he has laughed

at ; some he has proved to be merely tricks to cast discredit upon men whom he found useful in the Provisional Government. On the 15th of January these eternal stories of plots had a strange development. Upon information received, the Provost Marshal, Colonel Hooper, and his assistant, Lieutenant Burrows, proceeded to arrest a Burman, named Nga Neing, on suspicion of being concerned in a plot to which two of the leading members of the Hloodaw were parties. The man denied all knowledge of the conspiracy, though pressed in the most vigorous and violent manner to disclose all he knew. He was confined with dacoits under sentence of death, and on the following day, being questioned again, and refusing the required answer, was ordered out to the south gate of the city in company with five dacoits. Both the Provost-Marshal and his deputy were present at first, but Colonel Hooper was called away, leaving the junior officer to complete "the examination." The five dacoits were pinioned, placed with their backs against a wall, and then shot in two batches. Nga Neing was called forward and again interrogated, but still pleaded ignorance. He was then bound and placed in his turn, with his back to the wall, among the dead bodies of the dacoits. The

sepoys who formed the firing party received the orders—"Ready!—Present." A police officer then went forward to the trembling wretch.

"Will you confess? If you do not confess you will be shot instantly!"

"Yes, I will confess; spare my life!" Two correspondents were looking on—Mr. Rose, of the *Rangoon Gazette*, Mr. Melton Prior, the special artist of the *Illustrated London News*—and some other Europeans, and a few Burmans. A note-book was borrowed from one of them, and the prisoner's confession, incriminating the two ministers, was taken down. The confession was handed to the Provost's deputy, and by him subsequently produced before Colonel Sladen as proof of the guilt of two of the members of his Council.

Colonel Sladen, an officer of long experience in Burma, with few illusions, has the reputation of being a stern man, and doubtless it is not undeserved; but he is also a cool-headed and just man, and he heard with indignation of the method with which the confession had been wrung by physical and moral torture from the Burman. He remonstrated strongly with the young officer, and finally wrote a strong protest to General Prendergast

on the iniquity of the whole proceedings. What military law on the subject may be I do not know; but the Duke of Wellington held that martial law is simply the enforcement of ordinary law by military tribunals, when the regular law courts are prevented from working by armed resistance. The Indian Penal Code very clearly provides a check against the abuse of power for the purpose of extracting confessions by threats or torture.

The Chief Commissioner, of course, refused to receive evidence obtained against the two Burmese ministers by such unwarrantable means. The Rev J. A. Colbeck, S. P. G. Missionary in Mandalay, addressed the following protest to the Chief Commissioner:—"As an Englishman, a Christian, and a minister of the Gospel, I humbly beg you will take such steps as will for the future prevent the possibility of such barbarous proceedings; which, if allowed the apparent sanction of Government, cannot fail to bring shame and discredit upon our name, nation, and religion; and are directly opposed to the equity and humanity of our laws, the blessings of which were so recently extended to this country." The Chief's reply expressed approval of the protest, and strongly condemned

the action taken. Lord Randolph Churchill and Lord Dufferin also denounced the conduct of the officers when it was brought to their notice.

- The second instance which may be adduced is that in which the too curious use of the photographic camera added an unseemly element to military executions in Mandalay. Being desirous of getting photographs of the prisoners' attitudes and expressions at the moment the bullets struck them, the Provost-Marshal set up a photographic camera in a convenient position when the dread words of command, "Ready! Present" were given. The discharge was then delayed for a few minutes while the camera was brought to bear on the doomed men; the focus attained, the signal was given, the bullets struck the waiting men; the negatives were secured. This procedure probably did not add perceptibly to the suffering of the men expecting momentarily the fatal bullets; but there is something unpleasant and almost sinister at the coolness and deliberation with which the action of the tragedy was suspended in order that a scientific record might be taken of the effect, physical and moral, of the shock of bullets on the persons of defenceless and despairing men. Lord Dufferin at Calcutta

and the Ministers in England shared the indignation of Mr. Bernard, when they came to know what had been done. The then Secretary of State, Lord Randolph Churchill, at once telegraphed instructions that grave and immediate action should be taken with regard to the officer concerned. His successor ordered that the Provost Marshal should be tried by Court-martial. But no one supposes that statesmen and administrators, accustomed to recognise and respect the rights of humanity, would fail to reprobate acts of the kind. The fatal thing is that such acts under certain circumstances become inevitable under a natural law, which ordains that the practice of cruelty makes even merciful men cruel, dulling the moral sense until it is impossible to draw the line with any precision between what is legitimate and what is not.

It is fair to say that Colonel Hooper has the reputation of being a very good officer, and that the desire to photograph the Burmese when struck by bullets is attributed, not to any inhumanity, but to what may almost be regarded as a passion for securing an indelible record of human expression at the supreme moment. It is related of him that on one occasion when a sepoy went shooting at large at his officers and

comrades, he ran out with a photographic apparatus and brought it to bear upon the sepoy, who was in the act of taking aim at him. The homicidal soldier was struck at the instant by a bullet from another sepoy, and Colonel Hooper obtained his negative. At the battle of Mienlah the gallant officer carried his camera under fire, so that it might be available for the record of any exceptional incident.

The photographing of the men shot at Mandalay under the circumstances mentioned was undoubtedly reprehensible. It created a bad impression, from which Colonel Hooper must be prepared to suffer in public opinion. But it is open to doubt whether there is not something very pharasaical in the spirit which revolts at the operation of photographing a batch of men at the moment of their execution, when their execution in batches is accepted as an ordinary incident in the subjugation of a conquered people. If all the men who were shot were dacoits, or had committed any moral offence other than that of hazarding their life in a lost cause, the shooting would be righteous as well as necessary, but, speaking generally, the executions in such cases are exemplary, and not

punitiva. It is the custom to close the eyes and the ears to the real nature of the "salutary severities" which are sparingly alluded to in the narratives of military operations in a vanquished country. It would be a great gain to the cause of humanity if there were more Colonel Hoopers, who would focus and fix and make widely known, every horror which it is the custom to slur over in referring to incidents of the kind. If people at large realised with anything like exactitude, the real nature of the price which subjugated populations pay for the blessings of civilisation, sounder views on such subjects would perhaps become more prevalent. As has been said above, if the severities produced always and everywhere the tranquillising effects which are generally expected from them, it might be a duty to acquiesce, as it is the duty of a surgeon to inflict pain as the price of an ultimate good. But I am borne out by officers of experience in the opinion that, in other cases, long antecedent to the small war in Burma, the reckless resort to wholesale executions has worked disastrously against the interests which it was sought to uphold by those means. No trumpet of sedition has such an infuriating effect on a population as the shrieks of the women in the

villages and along the roads, lamenting brothers and husbands slain, not in battle, but as examples of the power and sternness of the conqueror engaged in "establishing a funk."

There is little doubt, I think, that the incident of the photographing of the dacoits had its origin in an occurrence that excited a considerable degree of interest and remark a short time previously, which shows that the Burmese have a great eye for the comic element in the terrible. A detachment of the Naval Brigade having captured a dozen dacoits, proceeded to execute them one by one, so as to make a deeper impression on the Burmese mind than the shooting of the whole batch at a volley might produce. The first man was placed standing with his back to a wall; a conical ball striking him between the eyes, carried off the whole top of his head, which disappeared in a strange, grotesque, unexpected way. His comrades, standing near, awaiting their turns, screamed with laughter at the sight; they laughed as they went one after the other to be shot in rotation, treating the whole affair as an extraordinary joke. The Naval men, who had calculated upon creating a great moral impression by the deliberate character of the execution, returned to their station, much

disappointed, and not a little indignant ; shooting these dacoits, they said, was of no use, for they did not mind it in the least, they thought it great fun.

I have been told by an eye-witness that in a case where two Burmans were flogged, the second man objected to be held to the posts as the first had been, and leant against them unbound, not uttering a word till the flogging was completed. Then he asked if there was any more, and with a laugh, moved away, making a face.

" Nevertheless, if there be a chance of escape, these people show the same love of life as other men. Six dacoits were taken outside a stockade to be shot and beheaded ; their hands were tied behind their backs, but when they came into the open they broke from their guards, and ran for their lives. They were followed up and put to death by bullet or bayonet, resisting strenuously as best they could. I have no doubt from what I hear that the decapitation of the bodies and the exposure of the heads had a bad, and not a good, effect on Burman opinion. The exposure of corpses on the cross was only resorted to by the native authorities in cases of exceptional atro-

city, and was but seldom seen. And in those cases there was no decapitation, which is regarded as a great aggravation of the indignity.

The phoongyees are a kindly charitable folk, and they are always ready and even eager to do offices of kindness for those who are in trouble. Yet like the rest of their countrymen, they are light-hearted, with all their sedate philosophy, and they can laugh heartily on occasions where the harder European would not need religious precepts to induce him to keep a grave face. Two monks were sitting down at what seemed a safe distance—some half a mile inland—from one of the little riverside townlets, which was being cannonaded by one of our war vessels recently. A cannon shot passed through the head of one of them, leaving no trace of it behind. The other phoongyee, and the people around, thought the unexpected disappearance of the poor man's head as he was speaking so droll, that they roared with laughter; the surviving phoongyee laughed again when he was telling a British officer subsequently of the incident.

The occurrences at Mandalay drew attention to the manner of dealing with the uprising in Burma. Lord Dufferin was under-

stood to regard with dissatisfaction the severities resorted to, not indeed generally, but in too many instances. On the 3rd of February, the day when the Viceroy left Calcutta for Burma, General Prendergast issued a general order, putting an end to the free-handed executions which were the great blot upon the operations in Burma since the middle of December. "The Lieutenant-General Commanding-in-Chief desires it to be clearly understood that no executions are to take place except in the case of criminals sentenced to death by civil officers." This put an end to a great scandal, and a grave danger. The promiscuous shooting of so-called dacoits was in the opinion of observers a great, if it was not the sole, cause of the rapid spread of the movement of resistance which had been for a month past organising itself in Upper Burma. It was in too many cases accepted as an axiom that all that was necessary was to shoot out of hand, whoever was found under circumstances of suspicion, and thereby establish a terror which would produce the immediate submission of the population. This system is now acknowledged to be a mistake. It was not in accordance with the views or intentions of the Viceroy, or the Government of India. That the severities which

are now at an end, were not resorted to by superior order, but were the result of over-zeal and inexperience in warfare, is sufficiently shown by the fact that the civil officers have been very discriminating in the infliction of the death penalty. Stories told in Rangoon papers, sometimes with an unpleasant tone of satisfaction, that dacoits have been condemned and shot in large batches—in one instance fifty-two were said to have been so slain by order of civil officers—were wholly unfounded.

But let us return to the dacoits in Burma at the station north of Pagan—which is spelled Nyoungoo and pronounced any way the speaker likes—the newly constructed lines hold the headquarters of 700 men. Expeditions are constantly going out and returning, usually bringing in a dacoit or two. While the steamer lay there two dacoits are brought in by a few men of the 11th B. N. I., one of whom, a great big fellow, holds the prisoners by the top-knot, and causes some amusement by almost lifting them by the hair of their heads over the little ditches and inequalities which render the way uneven. But many prisoners are not brought in. A detachment of twenty men of the 11th B. I. went out on the 2nd January, escorting Mr. Eyre, the Deputy

Commissioner, to look after dacoits said to be in a village six miles off. Lieutenant O'Meara, of the R. E., accompanied the party. Between 11 and 12 a small Burmese cart, drawn by some villagers, arrived on the bank, conveying Mr. O'Meara, who had been terribly cut about the hands and head with daks. It appeared that he and Mr. Martini and Mr. Eyre had gone ahead of the escort and, coming on the dacoits, were at once attacked, Mr. Eyre's horse being shot under him. Mr. O'Meara was nearly cut to pieces, but the dacoits had not time to do the same to his comrades, as the soldiers were known to be at hand. They arrived on the spot half an hour after the officers had been so roughly handed, and arrested four men who were found near. Two of these were shot as dacoits next morning; the other two were, fortunately for themselves, known to Mr. Martini as quiet cultivators, whose land was in the neighbourhood. On his testifying that they were not dacoits they were let off; but they had a very narrow escape.

A dooly was sent down from the camp to meet the hand cart when it arrived in the village, and the unfortunate engineer was at once transferred to the hospital tent. Scarcely was he placed there than Major Roberts issued

orders for fifty men of the Liverpool Regiment and fifty of the 11th B. I. to fall in. The cheerful alacrity with which the order was carried out was something to see. The men went at the double to the parade, and within five minutes a hundred men were moving through the village, at times at the double, and out into the open. No rations, no water—two doolies and a dozen followers; away they went inland, over a rising ground, along a “road” which consisted of sand ankle deep.

In less than an hour some five miles were covered. I marched with the column, believing the brush with the dacoits would come off within the reasonable distance of six or seven miles. Such a pelting march through deep hot sand, with the noon-day sun blazing overhead, certainly was trying. Nearly a dozen men fell out, or rather were ordered out, for they seemed on the point of sunstroke. The dacoits were supposed to be in the neighbourhood, but there was no sign of them. Away the column marched again at the double to get over a rising ground. The dacoits were probably making their way northward to the hills. I had no arms or food

or water ; so I decided to go back with the men who had to return on account of the heat. It was certainly the stiffest bit of walking I ever did, and the heartiness and good-will with which the men went the tremendous pace, carrying their rifles and ammunition, gave evidence of their spirit and stamina. The Bombay Hunt in full ory after a jackal would have nothing to envy them. As I write this at five o'clock in the evening, the column has not returned. The sand, the heat, the worse than no roads, the light-footedness of the Burmese, who go by short cuts through the jungle, are the invariable accompaniments of these expeditions, which are very trying to the endurance of the men.

The private soldiers, however, speak gratefully of the manner in which the women of the villages bring their chatties of water on their heads when they have to stay over night in the interior. But there is hardly anything in the way of food to be procured. When the men go out without rations, there is but the slightest prospect of anything to eat before a return to camp. There is no cavalry. But on the 2nd January I noticed that some half-a-dozen Burmese police had put in an

appearance. They are mounted on little ponies, the size of Newfoundland dogs, and with their coquettish little dahs are very proud of themselves. Their chief danger, I think, is that of being taken by Tommy Atkins for dacoits. Whether the dacoits will take them for police is another matter. It is a fixed idea in the minds of Anglo-Burmans that the Burmese are useless as police, and are only useful to the dacoits to whom they furnish hints and at whom they never fire. But even in London the police are regarded as fair marks for severe criticism. •

CHAPTER XVI.

CAMPAIGNING AGAINST THE DACOITS.

The Expedition to Bhamo—Expeditions against the Pretenders and the Dacoits—Organising a Police Force—Utilising the Hlootdaw—The Chinese at Bhamo—The Mandalay-Toungoo Railway Scheme—Death of Lieut. Cockerain—Colonel Gordon's Expedition—Europeans killed—General White sends out Columns—Mulla Ismail in his garrisoned House—Sharp Fighting in January—Colonel Simpson's Force—The Atwin Woon and his Stratagem—Colonel Sladen and the Burmese.

IN the middle of December, General Prendergast left Mandalay with about two thousand men, to occupy Bhamo. The only difficulty encountered was that arising from the shallowness of the river. The expedition stopped on the way for some days, and in Mandalay it was reported that diplomatic difficulties with the Chinese had proved an obstacle. There was no ground that I could ascertain for this supposition. The Commander-in-Chief had, however, received instructions to avoid any collision with the Chinese, and it is possible that the expedition was carried northward with a certain degree of circumspection in order to give due effect to those instructions. Besides this expedition to

Bhamo, four others were sent out at the end of December. There was an expedition to Shwaybo, to rescue some Europeans who were in danger there, to quiet the country, and to put down a Pretender who had raised the Royal standard. Shwaybo is distant some sixty miles from Mandalay. A third expedition was sent to Chinwin, to rescue the European employés of the Bombay-Burma Trading Corporation at Kendat, and to restore the native officials, who had been driven out on account of their good-will to us. A fourth expedition was ordered to go along the telegraph line, and restore the communications between Mandalay and Myngyan. There were garrisons at the following ten points to maintain the communications, and keep order in the districts immediately around, namely: Sagine, Toundueingyi, Nyoung Oo, Yenoungyoung, Natoji, Pokoko, Minclah, Myngyan, Samait Kyan, and Nyingyan. Later on an expedition would proceed from Mandalay along the telegraph line to Nyinghyan, near the frontier at Toungoo—the route which will be taken by the contemplated railway when the funds are forth coming.

A police force was being organised with a view to giving support to the Burmese Woons or Prefects who had given in their adhesion to

the Hlootdaw. It was intended that this force should consist of two thousand five hundred Burmans, who would be distributed throughout the country. It was not easy to organise it, but the Tyndah's influence was surmounting obstacles, and there was a fair prospect of success. The deportation of that Minister rendered the difficulties well nigh insuperable, for the force was to be raised and employed in great part in localities not actually occupied by the British. Major Adamson, who was the officer in charge of Mandalay, objected to having an armed Burmese police patrolling that city. So this scheme hung fire, a circumstance to be regretted, for it no doubt was one of the considerations which led to the decision arrived at in February during Lord Dufferin's visit to continue martial law throughout the country until November next.

Thus the civil administration in Upper Burma was incoherent and almost non-existent, deriving its only support from a military occupation, which extended to only ten positions, outside the capital and Bhamo. The endeavour to utilise the Hlootdaw was successful up to a certain point, but circumstances were against it, and on the Viceroy's arrival at Mandalay the Hlootdaw was

abolished. The ten military stations just enumerated were increased to twenty-five, some small reinforcements being brought from India. It was originally the intention to break up the field force, and withdraw the bulk of it to India after the Viceroy's visit; but by the middle of February it was realised that it would be necessary to raise the strength of the army to eleven thousand men, General Prendergast having his head-quarters at Rangoon and commanding the forces in both the Burmas, with the first brigade at Mandalay and the second at Bhamo. The considerable measure of success attained by the dacoits in Lower Burma while the troops were engaged in the conquest of Upper Burma has shown the necessity for including the Lower country in whatever defensive arrangements may have to be made to make good our hold upon Upper Burma.

Bhamo was occupied by the expedition sent northward, without resistance, and the two hundred and fifty Burmese soldiers constituting the garrison were sent down to Mandalay. The Burmese are the dominant trading class at Bhamo, and they did pretty much what they liked in that town and in the surrounding districts under the eyes of the Burmese governor. They understand very well that with a British

administration all this will be at an end, and they are not, therefore, too well pleased at the change, but they have made the best of it so far. The expedition to Bhamo removed the military head-quarters from Mandalay at a critical time.

Mr. Bernard, the Chief Commissioner of Lower Burma, came up to Mandalay single-handed and proceeded with great zeal and activity to organise the administration of Upper Burma. He took Mandalay into his special charge, and superintended everything. Public works were organised to give employment to the starving inhabitants. Colonel Sladen, the Political Officer, as President of the Hlootdaw, the Supreme Council, worked with the Burmese ministers to restore the semblance of regular government throughout the country not in the actual occupation of British troops. The Mandalay-Toungoo Railway scheme was considered, but nothing could be done for want of money. Roads were designed for opening up the country and providing an alternative to the people who had taken to dacoity for want of any other means of subsistence.

The expeditions above mentioned were planned, and sent out to re-establish order. It is not easy to give a clear and connected account of

the somewhat desultory operations which followed, but the general outlines may be judged from a few of the leading incidents.

One of the first incidents which indicated the increasing gravity of the insurrectionary movement in December, and denoted that it was growing into a movement of resistance, was the death of a promising young officer, Lieutenant Cockeram, of the 23rd Madras Infantry. He was stationed down at Sagine, which is some sixteen miles from Mandalay and on the opposite side of the river. The fort there was delivered up without a blow struck, and the Burmese troops allowed to depart, after giving up their arms. Three companies of the 23rd M. N. I. and one of the Hampshire Regiment, were left as a garrison under Colonel Campbell, and they were unhappy that they had been left out in the cold, and would see no fighting. The country round about is, however, very beautiful, and if I mistake not, it will hereafter be a favourite place for the country-houses of Europeans whose business keeps them up at Mandalay. I saw Cockeram on December 23rd. He had been about the neighbourhood, and spoke of its beauty and fertility.

At that time there were no signs of dacoits anywhere near Mandalay. Two or three days

afterwards intelligence was brought that a gang was gathering at a place nine miles to the N. W., being probably some of the followers of Thaw-daw-min, Moung San Bohn, who so cruelly murdered the Bombay Corporation agents on the Chinwin river. Cockeram took thirty of his sepoy and was joined by Lys, a subaltern of the Hampshire Regiment, with thirty Europeans. They intended to stay out for one day only; but as they failed to find the dacoits in the village reported they sent back word to the commanding officer at Sagine that they would stay out another day, and pressed forward to a place, nine miles further on, where they were assured they would meet the enemy. This was on December 27th. At last they came upon the dacoits, who were pretty numerous, and had entrenched themselves in a pagoda and monastery, and showed fight. The two officers divided their men so as to attack the place on two sides. It was protected by jungle and brushwood, up to about forty yards, then quite open to the entrenchments. Cockeram dismounted and went alone, and somewhat incautiously, into the open to reconnoitre, and drew upon himself all the fire; he fell at once. Lieutenant Lys coming up from the other side saw Cockeran down and went

forward to help him, the men remaining under cover firing. Poor Cockeram was found dead, but Lys determined to carry off the body and called for volunteers, which was promptly answered by Private Witt, of the Hants Regiment, who gallantly helped to carry the officer's body, under cover. Lys was struck twice by bullets, once on his helmet, once on his revolver pouch, but not seriously hurt. Meanwhile six other men fell wounded, Corporal Harris, Privates Charles Smith and Martin of the Hampshire men, and three of the sepoy.

Finding it impossible to carry the position without guns, Lys returned, carrying off his wounded to Sagine. Besides the above casualties one sepoy was missing.

On the 28th a party under Colonel Gordon, of the 23rd M. N. I., consisting of three companies of his own regiment, with thirty sabres of the 2nd Madras Light Cavalry under Lieutenant Holloway, were despatched at 5 p.m. to make a night march and get to the rear of a body of dacoits some three miles north of Mandalay Hill, where they were committing serious depredations and greatly alarming the whole countryside. Shortly after midnight Lieutenant-Colonel Middleton, with two companies of the 21st M. I.,

forty sowars of the Madras Light Cavalry under Major Nunn, two guns of the 9-1 Cinque Ports, R.A., and a hundred and fifty men of the Hant Regiment under Major Collins, were sent to make a front attack. Middleton's party found the dacoits looting a village, and made a rush at them, driving them out and killing and wounding twenty—all Shans. The rest beat a rapid retreat, and Gordon's column failed to get round them in time to cut off their retreat, but fell in with another band of Shans and killed six of them. There were no casualties among our men.

It was of course regretted that we had so soon fallen foul of the Shans. The policy of Government was to detach them from the Burmese side, and to give them independence under their own native princes, "Sawbwahs" as they are called. In the old King Mindoo-Min's time these chiefs came in once a year or more to pay their tribute; but they seem never to have recognised Theebaw as their King, except in the most nominal manner, and it was thought possible to attach them bodily to our side as against the Burmese. Whether this can yet be done remains to be seen, but the small skirmishes in three or more directions point to a rising more

or less general against our Government, and in favour of a young Prince Myin Saing, eighteen years of age, who escaped from Mandalay in the disguise of a phoongyee and made his way to the Shan States.

On the 29th a party of military and police came upon an armed force of Shans, with two elephants carrying brass guns, under the leadership of a Burmese official who had a golden umbrella. The leader was killed, and the Shans driven back with loss. This was to the N. E. of Mandalay.

Then there was a further loss of life among the servants of the Bombay-Burma Company. One of their agents, Mr. George Calogreedy, in company with Messrs. Walker and Gray, started on Sunday last, 27th December, for their forest work to the south of Mandalay, and on the way to Ningyan, over which district they had come in perfect safety not a month before. They had twenty stand of arms, and anticipated no danger, as they were in company with the Win-daing-sagay Moun Choet, who, for recent services to Europeans, had, at the request of the Bombay-Burma Company, been appointed by the Hlootdaw, governor of a forest district in which the above gentlemen wished at once

to commence their operations. Moun'g Choet begged the foresters to wait, but they were determined to go on. Unpleasant signs were noticed after the party got beyond Amarapoora; their cartmen and boatmen deserted them; and the newly appointed governor, hearing that his post had been filled up by the Prince Myin Saing, now in arms against us, grew more anxious, and finally drew off his men and left the Bombay-Burmese agents to their fate.

On the morning of the 30th December Mr. Calogreedy and his party found they were confronted by some hundreds of armed Burmans. They sent word that they were traders, who wished to do their work peaceably, but were ready to give up their property if their lives were assured. The answer was that "as they were Europeans, their lives were required." The fight began and continued from 6 o'clock in the morning till 9 a. m., by which time Calogreedy and Walker and two of their followers had been shot by a party which took them in the rear. Eleven Burmans were killed and twenty-four wounded. Mr. Gray had his arm broken or disabled by a shot, and he was made a prisoner. The news was brought into Mandalay by a servant who ran away during the fight and

confirmed next morning by another servant, who, in spite of two dah cuts, managed to make his way back to the city. When he came away the bodies were lying as they fell. Moung Choet, the newly appointed governor, did not appear on the scene at all. He is a relative of the Tyn-dah Mingyee, and there is a possibility that he resented the deportation of his patron. Perhaps it is more generous to suppose he was overawed by the force he saw collecting round him, and made terms for himself, leaving the foreigners to fight their own battle.

All these incidents impressed General White that the time had arrived for striking a decisive blow, so as to break up the bands threatening the capital. He sent out one column on the last day of December and two started at different hours and by different routes on the 1st January. They are as strong as the exigencies of Mandalay would allow, and hope to scour the country and between them crush the enemy. This was the more necessary, as a panic was again setting in, and the city and suburbs were most uneasy. General White has done well in ordering strong patrols to march frequently through the night round the various quarters—fifty men in each patrol, and guards of twenty-five have been

placed at various centres. The palace stockade has been cut in the centre of each face and thrown forward so as to form block-houses that will command the whole exterior of the stockade and as far as the city gates, which are used for traffic. Each block-house is pierced for six or eight guns.

News was received from the northern column. Several Europeans, have been found safe at Shway Boh, on the Irrawady. Bhamo was reached on December 28th, the date anticipated.

The arrest of the Tyndah Mingyee was perhaps a popular measure amongst the Burmese generally, but it undoubtedly had the effect of terrifying the other ministers of the Provisional Council. They hardly recovered from the shock, and perhaps that accounts for the little headway which has been made against disorder and rebellion. The Kinwoon Mingyee returned in the early days of the new year, and it was hoped that he, with his long years of statesmanship in Burma, would more than fill the gap made by the absence of the Tyndah. But the expectation has not been quite realised.

Meanwhile the rumours grew in strength, and considering that the dacoits were gathering strength and courage in the country round

Mandalay, which was practically at their mercy. Little expeditions were continually sent out to particular villages where they were known to be ; but as a rule they had disappeared before the arrival of the tired column, a few prisoners are made—some of whom are shot, and some flogged—and the column returns. One column that had been sent some distance sent thirty of its small number to hospital—fatigue, irregular and bad food and bad water being the cause. A squadron of Madras Cavalry was sent out on another occasion, but found the jungle and swamp impassable, and returned.

It is doubtful whether the smaller of these counter-raids are not doing harm rather than good, though it is not possible always to turn a deaf ear to applications for assistance against the dacoits. The Burmese temperament is not so much disturbed, as might be wished by military executions ; it accepts them as a decree of fate which concerns chiefly those individuals who are its victims. If we want to make an impression on the survivor—which will prove deterrent rather than irritant—we must kill him too. And he gets out of harm's way by going into the jungle.

There is no doubt whatever that one practical outcome of the severities resorted to, is that the dacoits fight more desperately than

they did at the outset, and that they have learned to outmarch and evade the columns, and harass them with a certain intelligence and skill. They fire at them from thick cover, and cut up whoever gets separated from his comrades. If the garrisons—which at first numbered ten and were subsequently increased to twenty-five—by which certain positions are held along the line of communication between British Burma and Mandalay, were somewhat stronger than they are, no doubt the moral effect sought for by the present system would be realised. For the most part they are mere detachments that could not hold their own stockades if the enemy had the enterprise or the dash of Zulus or Arabs. As matters stand the dacoits are not intimidated; they grow bolder, and are beginning to group themselves under two Princes, who have turned up unexpectedly when no one counted upon such an apparition. One of the pretenders is a young fellow of eighteen, his prestige as a representation of the dynasty being doubtless of more value to his followers than his personal energy or skill in military affairs. He is a cousin of Theebaw. The other Princeling is older, and is also a royal cousin. A third pretender is spoken of, but he appears to be a myth; when he is captured he will be shot as

an impostor. The men following these representatives of Burmese royalty consider themselves soldiers; guns are obtained somehow, and they venture to give battle; but they are easily broken, and do not seem capable of standing a charge with the bayonet. They escape into the jungle, and no doubt laugh at the volleys that are fired after them.

The bazaar gup in Mandalay assigns to the Prince, who is moving through the country to the north, nine thousand men; while the other, sixty miles to the northward, near Shweebo, is said to have from 2,000 to 5,000 men under him. It is certain that the latter is levying every man he can by raids in the fields and villages, and that he burns the latter when the villagers do not join him. He boasts that he will take Mandalay. An expedition has been sent against him from the city; he will probably fall back before it to the south, extending in that direction the chaos and ruin which prevails so generally elsewhere. This leader has a fair number of men with fire-arms in his following; but as he has no arsenals or stores, and cannot get any supplies from outside, his stock of powder cannot last long.

The Shan Hills come down in one direction to within six or eight miles of Mandalay and

Amarapura, the old capital, five or six miles away. Thence the Shan Hills extend, with their alternating valleys and swamps, to the Sòng Koi—the Red River—of which the French conceived such hopes, believing that it would give them the monopoly of the trade of Yunnan. The Shans are a brave and stiff-necked people; they can fight better than the Burmans, but they trade when they can, being excellent peddlers; they fight or trade as circumstances suggest. Queen Supaya Lat contrived to set these people against her husband, by imprisoning the sister of a prominent man amongst them. The Shans refused to acknowledge Theebaw as a true King, calling him contemptuously the Little King, and declined to send him tribute. King Mindo-Min used to get twenty lakhs of tribute from them, but Theebaw got nothing but hard knocks, although he used occasionally to send five or six thousand men into their country to levy his dues. Two or three thousand men usually returned to report that the rest had died of fever. So matters stood when we deported Theebaw. It was natural to suppose that the Shans would be obliged to us for getting rid of the King, with his futile expeditions, but so far they have not

shown much gratitude. They are very busy looting the Burmans, and, forgetting that we are now masters of Mandalay, they talk of looting that city too. Shan dacoits were the first who ventured to come into actual conflict with our troops, and bands of men have moved down from the neighbouring hills into the immediate vicinity of the city, occasioning great alarm in the bazaars. The Shans, who were until Theebaw's reign regarded as subjects of the Burmese sovereign, are estimated at half a million. A million-and-a-half or more are either independent or subjects of China or Siam ; some owe a double allegiance to China and either Siam or Burma ; their political obligations would be intolerably complicated, but that they repudiate them altogether when they become too distracting. Their hills are difficult, and fever makes them deadly even to Burmans.

In the bazaars of Mandalay there was a regular scare in the last days of December, for it was believed that the Shans were at hand, and intended to burn the town. People shut up their shops and hid their goods. Very little could be bought anywhere. There was certainly an excuse for the panic. The morning of the 28th the Chief Commissioner, with a few sowars,

rode over to Amarapura to see where posts could be established to keep Shan marauders at a distance in that direction. General White, then in command, was also on the ground. A couple of companies of infantry had also been sent out there. When the Chief Commissioner and General White rode out on the plain, heavy firing was heard proceeding from a village ; they rode on to see what was the matter, whereupon Colonel Sladen sent fifty cavalry under Lieutenant Halloway to intercept them, and keep them from going where the enemy were in some force. What a prize the Shans might have had ! There were probably some two hundred of them under Burmese leaders. The military endeavoured to shut them into a certain village ; but they got through the jungle to another village, some two miles off. More troops were sent out.

The year closed, as I have indicated, with a great scare in Mandalay. There was heavy firing in three parts of the town during the previous night ; but that only meant that a good many people, being nervous, were apprehensive of visits from dacoits, and let off their guns to show that they were not afraid. A police force is being organised, and when in a few days it is got into working order, householders who fire

off their guns in the watches of the night will be deprived of the weapons of which they make such an untimely use. The alarm arose from the rumours of the increased boldness of the dacoits in the immediate neighbourhood of the city. We hear of the affair of Amarapura, and of the losses at the stockaded pagoda, nine miles from Sagine. There is a belief in the bazaar—where everything is believed—that on the night of the 1st January the city will be set on fire and looted; that the Shans are coming in their thousands, and that the two pretenders are going to join their forces and march on the city. The tradesmen close their shops and hide their goods, and even in the stockaded markets there is little or no business doing.

Mula Ismail, who owns, or at all events leases, the greatest of the bazaars—which yield him in good times Rs. 12,500 a month, out of which he pays the State Rs. 6,000 as royalty—has had his bazaar stockaded and garrisoned. His large and hospitable house, which he has generously placed at the disposal of Europeans visitors—myself amongst the number—is garrisoned also; the doors are of iron, and the windows are barred; both the market and the mansion can stand a

siege. Into a spacious godown the scared traders brought their valuables, their cash and jewels, and their silks, to the value, it is said, of twenty-five lakhs, in the dreadful moment of suspense, when it was not known whether the capital would be defended or surrendered, taken by storm and possibly burned, or whether it would be given up to pillage either by the dacoits, or by the Kulas coming fiercely up the river; the godown gates were bricked up, and made safe from fire and from chance spoilers, at all events. When things took a more reassuring turn, the brickwork was taken down and some of the valuables were removed. In part they have been shipped to Rangoon; but a great deal still remains on the premises, which are well guarded by big fellows from India—Mussulmans chiefly. There is one big Guzerati who shoulders his dah, and says he will fight twelve Burmans. This boast seems to be founded upon a misconception of the Burmese way of looking at things. The Burman is philosophical and practical; he has no particular pleasure in fighting; to kill is what he wants; if he be killed himself, it does not much matter; it is decreed; but that twelve men should waste their energy in fighting a Guzerati giant, when one or two wary fellows could polish him off

quietly if opportunity offered, would strike them as foolish. The Burman can wait. I have heard from a European that a Burman with whom he had a difference gave up six months to watching for an opportunity—which has not yet come—of shooting him in the forest without fuss. The basis of the national temperament is meditation ; taking things easily ; making the best of outward circumstances by submitting to them until they change a little. Sit down, smoke a cigarette a foot long, and think ; all things in this life will come to you, and possibly *nirvana*—a blessed surcease of existence—in the next. •

• Throughout January the resistance increased in volume, if not in energy, and the expeditions against the armed bands grew larger, and there was some rather sharp fighting. On January 20th General White went off very suddenly and quietly, without a salute, and with only a small escort, up to Shwaybo, or as the military authorities always put it Moutshobo. Colonel Simpson's gallant little force of two companies of the South Wales Borderers and a detachment of Native Infantry had been for some days working against the enemy at Shwaybo.

They received intelligence a few days before that the enemy was gathering in large numbers

a few miles south-east of their head-quarters. Colonel Simpson set off with Lieutenant Gwynne and one hundred and seventy R. W. Fusiliers, and Lieutenant Carnegy and eighty-five men of the 12th Madras Infantry. They came upon the enemy at Kadoc-Konityna, twenty miles from Shwaybo. They were in large numbers, five hundred of them with muskets, being placed in a pagoda which had a strong wall, five feet high all around it. These were under the immediate leadership of Boh-Thoung, well-known as a dacoit leader in King Mindoo-min's time. Another force of 1,500 armed with dahs and spears only was assembled at some distance away, and with them was the Prince Moungh Hmat or Htaik-tin-hmat. Our troops opened a very hot fire upon the pagoda, and then advanced quickly to the attack as at Shwaybo. The enemy's fire must have been well directed, for their first volley wounded three of our officers. Colonel Simpson fell, wounded severely in the face and head; Lieutenants Carnegy and Gwynne were also wounded; but Carnegy was able to go on with his men, who quickly got possession of the pagoda with a further loss of three Fusiliers wounded—Corporal J. Flaherty

and Private Plenderheath slightly, Private S. Gould dangerously. The 12th M. N. I. had one sepoy, Appanah, wounded.

Our men took the wounded back to the baggage guard, and then started for further pursuit of the enemy, who had already lost their leader, Boh-Thoung, and about forty others. The Burmans, however, had had enough for the day, and the Prince cleared out before our men could get anywhere near him. There was another reason for not prolonging the pursuit, that is our men have next to nothing but their arms and the clothing they stand in. They have no tents, and had only rations for some thirty days. Worst of all their boots are worn out with continual marching, so both Europeans and natives are very badly off, and as everybody knows a marching soldier is crippled with bad boots, [almost as soon as by no boots at all.

Colonel Simpson's force had no less than five fights since they went out just before Christmas, and may have as many more as guns and ammunition are said to be smuggled to the Prince and to Sagaing from Mandalay! The General in command, tired of his uneventful life in the palace, has gone up with a rush to

Shwaybo, with a small escort, but with large quantities of boots.

Major Ommanney distinguished himself at Myingyan. On the 15th January he got tidings that two princes, Tait-tin-Neing and Tait-tin-Paing, were assembling near him, having five large guns, fifteen small pieces, and 1,000 fighting men. Ommanney could only take 163 fighting men, but this included two guns of the Bombay Artillery, Mountain Battery, and thirty-seven Sabres of the 2nd Madras Light Cavalry under Lieutenant Burlton. Mr. Collins, the Political Officer, went out with the troops as usual. The enemy were further away than was reported, but on the 18th our men came upon them near Kamah village and, advancing to within four-hundred yards, opened fire. The Burmans quickly turned and fled, but not before some dozen had been laid low. Our loss was only one sepoy and four camp followers killed. The cavalry continued the pursuit, and got what they have hardly ever had before, a clear open field for their horses. The Burmans fled into the open, and the cavalry got at them. In the village was found a tent belonging to the Madras Cavalry. The Prince had taken it to his quarters as spoil of war. It was taken from

the cavalry in a rush of the Burmans below Ava a month or so ago; and shows that there has been an occasion when the Burman was too much for the trooper.

On the 19th the villagers of Sabagain attacked the rear-guard and plundered the coolies. Whether this was a real fight or only an organised robbery I cannot find out, but the Major consulted with Mr. Collins, and thought it best to make an example, so he burnt their village for them. During the pursuit Private Kelly, of the Liverpool Regiment, fell out and was missed. The cavalry and Burmans searched for him, but, unfortunately, could not find him. A Phoongyee of the neighbourhood offered to bring in arms if Major Ommanney would give him ten days. He was allowed twenty-four hours, and brought in a few muskets. The heavy guns were not seen, but six small brass guns were captured, and the great body of the enemy made off in the jungle and high crops northwards. "High crops" reminds one that harvesting will be sadly neglected this year, and scarcity is sure to come with its usual attendants of crime and misery.

As the two princes retreated northwards, a flying column of all arms under Major Warner, of the 2nd Madras Cavalry, was sent from Man-

delay down south below Ava to meet them. This column was out a whole week, in very light marching order, but never came up with any considerable number of the enemy. On the 22nd January the rebels attacked them, but the firing was at long ranges, not within 500 yards, so the result may easily be accounted for twenty-four Burmans killed and not one of our men touched. The force arrived at Kyouksay, a large village of 1,500 people, but the princes with guns, seven elephants, and 200 Shan followers, had left the place a day previously, retreating south again. One Burman caught with arms in his possession and in a sort of uniform with green facings, evidently one of the princes' picked men, was chased and caught. The prisoner was shot as a rebel or dacoit. Colonel Lowndes, the Political Officer, did not like the duty of condemning him, and was more than half merciful in the case of two other prisoners whom he let off.

If all soldiers made sure that what they were shooting at was a man and a fighting man, one would not object so much to recount these skirmishes, but it is unfortunately not the case. An officer who went out with this party tells my correspondent, who writes me these details, that he met a native officer excitedly exclaiming

"Sahib, there is a party of Burmans under a tree, let us fire 'a volley at them." The officer humanely said "Let me see them first." He rode to within 300 yards, and found the "enemy" was a wretched trembling group of eight women and children, stripped of all their property by the dacoits, and now all but slaughtered by the blind zeal, or shall I say thirst for blood, of our men. These instances to show there is ground now for remonstrance. If our parties go out here and there killing twenty or thirty or forty Burmans and hardly ever losing a man themselves, they might exercise a little more coolness in their firing, and spare the prisoners. Tales are told of sowars charging at unarmed, defenceless men, and of Europeans firing or wishing to fire on men armed with a stick. This surely is beneath the dignity of a true soldier; and it is to be hoped our officers will, if necessary, sternly reprove or punish men guilty of such conduct.

There is good news from Shwaybo again. The troublesome Minhla Prince, Htaik-tin-Hmat, or Moungh-Hmat, has evidently had enough of the Welsh Fusiliers, and probably his men from the lower country about Sagaing, are anxious to return to their homes. Anyhow, from three

independent sources we get the news that Mounghmat has come southwards, and is trying to effect a junction with Moungh-Nga-Oo, a dacoit leader at large in the country which lies to the west of Sagaing between the rivers Moo and Chindwin.

News comes thickly. In a bulletin, issued 18th January, the names of the Bombay Burma people rescued by the Chinwin expedition which reached Kendat on January 4. The names of the rescued men are Ruckshull Morgan, Bretto, and D'Gois. The Woon of Kendat is numbered among those saved by Colonel Johnstone, the Political Agent at Manipur; the old man was in peril through his kindness to the Europeans, and the Government will not be slow to acknowledge his services.

Kendat is in the Upper Chinwin district; in the Lower Chinwin Hla-oo, a notorious dacoit chief, is said to have been shot by his Lieutenant, which is an indication of a breaking-up of the bands there. From the Chinwin coming across country to Sagaing the route is through some villages where Roman Catholic priests have been established for a great many years. Ngabak was at one time almost a Christian village, but it has suffered pillage two or three times lately, and many of the

Christians, with their priests, have come away. Father Leconte came to Mandalay, and was, by order of the Chief Commissioner, supplied with twenty-five of Theebaw's old muskets (Brown Besses) and a quantity of ammunition. He went back with these to his villages, and armed the people. Not knowing the turn of events, the dacoits sent word they were coming again to requisition on the 5th day of the Moon. So the villagers took time by the forelock, and made a surprise march upon the dacoits, using their weapons with good effect; and not only scattered their enemies, but recovered two hundred carts and heaps of plunder, including a large part of the Reverend Father's property.

Coming towards Mandalay from Ngabak we get into the neighbourhood of Sagaing, the scene of several late actions. Here again things begin to look well for peace at last. The rebel Prince Kyoo Nyo, a son of the late War Prince and heir-apparent, who has given us so much trouble, has come to an untimely death. I cannot pretend to be sorry for him, but the manner of his taking off is open to objection.

Colonel Sladen has been urging the ministers of the Hlootdaw to do something for their own

credit, and his, as he is almost their only supporter in the present crisis, and he has himself incurred a certain unpopularity amongst Anglo-Burmans and some of the British officers on account of his carrying on the administration with Burmese help. He one day told them plainly that they would have done more to stamp out dacoity and rebellion in the old king's days, or would have suffered for it. The Hlay-thin-Atwin Woon took the rebuke to heart, and sent trusty men with muskets over the river to Sagaing, where they joined the prince, and handed over arms and ammunition as proofs of their good faith. They quietly made a party for themselves in the prince's camp, and one night in a disturbance, which they purposely created, they shot the prince dead and fled to Mandalay. The Hlay-thin Atwin Woon adduces this as an act of service to the British Government, but it will gain him but little credit. It is a question for casuists—"Is this murder or legitimate war?" The dacoits, it is expected, will probably break up there.

I hear that on the return of the Atwin Woon to Mandalay he protested that he had done nothing wrong, that all had been accomplished

in accordance with the usages of war. He professed to be much hurt at the imputation upon his honour and honesty.

Then there is a sensation about the reported treachery of the Hlay-thin Atwin Woon. He is an active but an unscrupulous man. Colonel Sladen thinks him a capable and trustworthy man—trustworthy, that is, where his own interests lie in the path of duty. They greatly mistake the Colonel, who think he is blind to the weaknesses of Burman character; but as he says, "These ministers know now, as well as we do, on which side their bread is buttered." The Hlay-thin Atwin Woon being urged on to exert himself to put down dacoity and restore order determined to take the field himself and naturally proceeded to his old hunting-ground—the district to the north and west of Sagaing, into which neighbourhood the rebels from Shwaybo were reported to be retreating. He was to hunt out dacoits, reinstate old officials, and generally to pacify the country. For this purpose he took out with him at the end of January, some two hundred and fifty Burman police, and arranged with the military force at Sagaing to make a circuit and meet a party of troops at a village some three marches to the north. The two parties

met, but found no dacoits. They separated, and the English force under Major Braddon, of the Hampshire Regiment, started to return by the route the Hlay-thin Atwin Woon's force had come, the Hlay-thin and his party going further north. Major Braddon, before one march of his return could be made, came upon a burning village, and on inquiry found that the Hlay-thin's men had been in it only a few hours before. Still as the depredators were reported dacoits, he followed, came up to a party cooking their rice under trees, fired upon them, and among the rest killed two women. If these turn out to be real dacoits, it is a bad case for the Hlay-thin, as he must have known by his scouts and local information of the presence of any gang of dacoits in the neighbourhood. Mr. Law, a smart young officer of police, is positive that he can bring evidence to convict the Hlay-thin of giving false information. The Hlay-thin will return before the Viceroy comes, and will no doubt wish to appear well in the eyes of the new ruler. He will probably have a good answer to make to Mr. Law. Colonel Sladen stands by his man. The

presence of women with the supposed dacoits is singular, and throws a doubt upon the whole affair. No time apparently was given to the Burmans to declare themselves, and the first message they had was a volley. It is not always quite certain that those who are said to be dacoits are robbers in arms or are even men. It seems somewhat difficult to pronounce judgment. This incident took place on January 31.

A more real affair took place in the Shwaybo district on January 27. Prince Moungh Hmât and dacoit Hla Oo or Nga Oo had somehow joined forces and entrenched themselves on the right bank of the Moo river, which runs parallel to the Irrawaddy and Chindwin, midway between them flowing due north to south. Thither went the fighting Welshmen and scattered the Burmans, driving them from their stockade with considerable loss. Our men had a morning's work, killed fifty-three of the enemy, took their spoil, and retired to a neighbouring village at 11-30 a.m. to get out of the hot sun. Another party of Burmans from the north pounced upon the village, only, however, to shar

the fate of their scattered countrymen. Our men fell in as they were, all sorts of uniforms or no uniforms; but they did what was required, and were then left in peace. The Welsh Fusiliers and their companions may be sure when they visit Mandalay that they will get a hearty welcome.

The correspondent, to whom I am indebted for these details, says that on February 5, Captain Macdonald, of the Hampshire Regiment, commanding at Ava, had a skirmish with a party of dacoits at Ta-da-oo, a place seven miles south-east of Ava. The enemy lost four killed, and four were captured and soundly flogged. I should say they will remember the flogging as much as the shooting. Dead men tell no tales. There were no casualties on our side; but evidently our officers think there is a greater gathering there, for to-day a second expedition has left Mandalay for that neighbourhood. It would be unpleasant for the Viceroy's steamer to be fired upon, and there are places just about Ava and Sagaing, where a few good shots might do mischief as the steamers work their way up.

Turning northwards we come to the scene of Colonel Simpson's successes, which must have

had a good effect. Here again the dacoits have over-reached themselves. A dacoit leader went to a village for twenty-five men and so many guns, giving them his knightly word that, if they did not in due time produce their quota, their village would be burned down. Sure of success, the chief went with only a small gang of his followers to receive his supplies. The villagers, too, were ready, thinking it impossible to get out of it; but as they marched away the pressed men seeing they outnumbered the press gang made a counter-plot, shot the dacoit chief, and struck for home and country again. I think this was fair enough.

After the fight at Sagaing on January 10th, the enemy, instead of making for Shwaybo to the north as was expected, made for the south-west, and it was conjectured they might reassemble in the neighbourhood of Pagan. Major Stead, of the 11th Bengal Infantry, is in command at Nyoungoo, just north of Pagan. The dacoits seemed to be gathering strength, so the Major went out with one hundred and eighty men to try conclusions with them. He met two hundred of them at a place about twenty miles north-east of Pagan, but had only a running fight—pursuing

the enemy two miles through the jungle. He lost one man, a private of the 8th King's Liverpool Regiment shot through the heart. Two dead bodies of dacoits were found. On the 20th he returned to Pagan, seeing no traces, and hearing no news of the Prince, further than that he was supposed to be with a force near Myingyan.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE QUESTION OF ANNEXATION
IN ITS FINANCIAL ASPECTS.

Progress of Lower Burma—Burmese Patriotism—Superstitious Veneration for Royalty—Indian Opinion of the Burmese—Bishop Bourdon on Annexation—The Burmese desire a Vassal-King—Burmese Rights Forfeited by Surrender—Cost of the War—Will Annexation Pay?—Surplus of Lower Burma—Scanty Rainfall in the Upper Country—Consequent Aridity—The Earth-Oil—Theebaw's Revenue—Probable Deficit under British Administration.

IN Mandalay, as in Rangoon, the question of the future of Upper Burma was the one topic of discussion. Not only Europeans but Mussulmans and others were nearly unanimous in holding that annexation was the best course, the most simple, and the most profitable in every sense for all concerned. Those who were so strongly in favour of annexation were to a man convinced that Upper Burma would pay as largely as British Burma has done. Lower Burma has

advanced in prosperity with a rapidity of growth usually associated with American cities. If Upper Burma has not done the same, the reason is evident: Theebaw's misgovernment and tyranny well nigh ruined the country, which will be at once redeemed if it be annexed for good and all to British Burma.

All Europeans, however, were not of this undoubting faith. I think I met three who looked at the matter from a different point of view. One, a commanding officer who had marched at the head of his force over three hundred miles of Upper Burman territory, stated that he was much surprised at finding how erroneous were certain opinions that were held in Rangoon with regard to the state of affairs on the north of the frontier. He had been told that there were no roads at all, and he found that there were more of them, and of better construction, than in the Lower country, away from big towns. Roads were constructed up-country in obedience to the Buddhist belief that to make them is one of the works of merit which will count in a man's favour. The houses, he was told, were inferior in kind; if there was any difference, it seemed to be

in favour of those in Upper Burma. The people were believed to be ground down by tyranny, and eager to overthrow the Mandalay government. Except in certain districts where there had been a drought he found them well-fed, and apparently contented with their lot. They made no complaint of oppression, and gave no evidence of rejoicing at our coming ; on the contrary they took kindly to dacoity against us.

I may mention here an incident which occurred in Prome, and came under the cognisance of Major Alexander, the Deputy Commissioner of that district. Some three weeks after Theebaw had been sent a prisoner down the river, a woman of Lower Burma, who was sitting at a loom in her little shop, said by way of gossip to a woman from Upper Burma, who was weaving next door, that King Theebaw was by that time in Madras, in the hands of the English. The up-country woman rebuked her neighbour for making a false statement of the kind, and said that if the King's spies heard her, her head would be cut off. The neighbour, better acquainted with the progress of events, said that it was all over with the King, that he had been con-

quered, and sent away to India to be put in prison. This was too much for the patriotism of the Upper Burman woman, whom she denounced as a liar, and an enemy of the King. A stand-up fight took place between the two women in the street, where it caused a general commotion.

Major Alexander told me of another instance of the susceptibility of Burmans under present circumstances. A man of some respectability came to Prome from Rangoon, and told one or two friends of some rumoured successes of the King's troops. He was asked to write out what he had heard, and he did so. His bulletin was copied and re-copied until three hundred "proclamations" were in circulation through the town, every one believing and evidently hoping that this news was true. In Upper Burma, when the surrender and deportation of the King and Queen became known, the women, and even the men, in the villages, wept and broke out into lamentations. Colonel Sladen, who is a vigorous advocate of annexation, admits that the Burmese have a superstitious veneration for the Royal family. It is true, that he also declares that they are not only desirous of being annexed, but they are praying for annexation as

a deliverance from intolerable oppression. The Burmese—if this is what they are praying for—have, it must be admitted, a singular way of saying their prayers.

The assertion so freely and so confidently made by every ninety-nine Europeans out of a hundred in both the Burmas, that the dearest wish of the Upper Burmans is to be assimilated to the position of their southern brothers, and made British subjects once for all, scarcely bears the test of verification. Some Upper Burmans—officials of a medium class who think they might get on better as servants of our Government—are ready to say that annexation is what the people wish for. But that is not the general desire, if any heed be given to the avowal of natives of India, who themselves are, from various motives, in favour of annexation. They report somewhat sarcastically that the Burmese people believe that a King somehow helps them to heaven; that he is not only their ruler but their deity, or at all events represents the deity; and that they are simple enough to think that it would be a great misfortune to be deprived of his guidance and protection in matters secular and religious.

Bishop Bourdon thinks that the Burmese revolt at the arrogance and assumption of

their sovereigns and long for deliverance. This is obviously a French way of looking at the matter. That which ought to be, is not always that which is. The notion that these people feel humiliated by the prostrations which are part of the royal ceremonial seems to be founded on western instincts, and reasoning *a priori*. The Burmese feel no objection to grovelling on knees and elbows in the presence of royalty. I myself saw two young maids of honour kneeling in an almost devotional attitude in the presence of a princess ; they were certainly not in the least humiliated by the character of the homage they paid her, as they held, the one her cigarette, and the other a light ; they were as happy on their bended knees before her, as I should have been in that attitude myself. We must not attribute to the inhabitants of the farther Burma our western sentiments of human dignity ; the immortal principles of Eighty-nine have not made these people ashamed of a proud humility. But certainly that humility finds its expression in postures and tones that to us seem to go beyond even the requirements of "the canine loyalty" characteristic of a certain period in European history.

The notion that the Burmese are tired of bending the back, and casting down the eye,

and knocking the forehead on a palace floor never profaned by a boot, is erroneous. All that suited them in the past, or it would not have become customary ; and it suits them still. There can be no doubt, however, that opinion has progressed to the extent of recognising the necessity for curtailing some of the more sublime attributes of the almost divine individual who fills the throne. In almost every case when a Burmese ventures to speculate on the future he says that " a king in name," a " nominal king," a " king who could do what the English want to be done," would meet the general need. A king able to do exactly what he liked was not expected ; such a paragon was beyond hope, and the Burmese seemed to be very philosophically resigned to the idea of a king of restricted power, who would be bound over to good behaviour. But even this restricted aspiration has been disappointed, and for good or for evil the Upper Burmans, like the Lower, must submit their destinies to British guidance.

For all the purposes of practical politics the Burmese forfeited their rights to independence when their King and army and capital surrendered without a blow, and placed the future of the country in the hands of the English

Commander-in-Chief. Their subsequent resistance is unavailing, lacking as it does coherence and force, and a defined patriotic purpose. The views and interest to be considered are those of the Government into whose hands the Burman dynasty so readily surrendered them. It is for the conquerors to decide what shall be done with Burma now that they have taken possession of it. Shall they annex it, or re-establish a native sovereignty, or place a vassal Prince on the throne under the tutelage of a British Resident supported by a garrison and by all the prestige of the Government of India. We know what has been resolved upon, and I do not propose now to deal with points of controversy which have lost their practical interest, but it will contribute to the understanding of a somewhat difficult question and avert some future disappointment, if we examine carefully the circumstances under which the British Government determined to annex Upper Burma and convert the dominions of King Theebaw into a British province. And first let us see whether the country which we have resolved to annex is likely to prove a good financial investment. The cost of the war is estimated at £300,000—a sum which will probably be exceeded in this instance, as such estimates

have been exceeded in all other cases. At the worst, however, the military expedition will not involve any serious outlay, such, for instance, as that which converted the estimate of two millions for the Afghan war into an expenditure of twenty millions. Nothing of this kind need be anticipated in connection with the Burman conquest, provided we be not involved in a struggle with China arising from the claims of the latter Power to the possession of Bhamo and the surrounding districts. But this is a political consideration that must be kept apart from matters of finance which we shall have to deal with in any case.

With regard to the important question, "Will annexation pay?" I believe the answer worked out by the Chief Commissioner is that for the first five years annexation will involve a burden on the finances of British Burma or of India; but after the country had been opened up and developed, it will give a surplus. One official, who has given a good deal of attention to this matter, believes that in fourteen years Upper Burma, if carefully worked, would yield a surplus of a million sterling per annum. To show that anticipatory estimates are not always exaggerated, I may refer to the Commission, at the

head of which was Sir Richard Temple, that proceeded to Lower Burma in 1860 to consider the financial prospects in that province, then yielding a bare sixty lakhs of revenue. Sir Richard and his colleagues, after going into the matter, predicted that if all went well the province would eventually give a revenue of eighty lakhs. The present revenue of Lower Burma is two hundred and eighty lakhs ! This is for the annexationists an encouraging piece of history, which I owe to the candour of the Chief Commissioner, who himself doubts the expediency of making Upper Burma a province to be administered on the lines of Lower Burma.

If the difference in the present financial situation of Upper and Lower Burma were due wholly to the fact that while the former groaned under the oppression of King Theebaw and his predecessors, the latter was ruled by a succession of capable British administrators, there would certainly be no reason to hesitate on financial grounds to submit the Upper country to the rule which has been so successful in the Lower. But geographical differences exist which have been strangely ignored since the time when Lord Dalhousie, the most practical and unsentimental

of annexationists, having decided to seize Pegu and thus round off Lower Burma, determined to leave Upper Burma alone. The fertility of Lower Burma is insured by its abundant rainfall, amounting to one hundred and in some localities even to two hundred and twenty inches in the year. It is besides accessible in all directions from the sea, creeks, and rivers opening it up alike to our naval and military force and to our commerce.

Upper Burma, remote from the sea, scarcely gets thirty inches of rain, and for some years past there has been a distinct tendency towards a diminution of even that scanty supply. It is said that the destruction of the forests, owing to the development of the export of timber, is in part answerable for the lowering average of the rainfall. Whatever the cause may be, of the fact there is no doubt, that for some time past, especially within the last three years, the population of Upper Burma has found an increasing difficulty in procuring an adequate food supply from their own soil. There has been a large migration to Lower Burma, while the demand for rice from that country steadily rose last year; the immense quantity of ninety-five thousand tons of that grain was procured from

the British territory. The deficiency of the water-supply led to disease and mortality among the cattle ; hides were sent in unprecedented quantities to Rangoon, and helped to pay for the rice. The amount of silver remitted to meet the balance was so considerable that it is evident that for some years past they have been melting down their ornaments to pay for food.

Upper Burma is on the whole an arid country, while Lower Burma is well watered and productive. The plains yield wheat of good quality, but the sparseness of the population renders agricultural operations, on any considerable scale, precarious and costly. In Lower Burma the abundant harvests could not be got in without the help of the thousands of coolies who come from India for the high wages paid—an attraction which in quiet times operates also upon the natives of Upper Burma, who come down the Irrawady in their own boats, which they sell at a profit, returning with their savings on the decks of the steamers. Wages in Lower Burma are much higher than in India. In Upper Burma men will not work for less than twelve or fifteen rupees a month, and few care to hire themselves out to work for another, even for that high payment. The forest produce, and the yield of the

mines, and of the oil wells, allowed for to their utmost, the country, arid as it is and with an insufficient population, cannot be regarded as promising any such out-turn as that which has been obtained from the lower provinces.

It is the opinion of observers who are in the best position to ascertain the facts that Upper Burma is not at all comparable in fertility to Lower Burma, and cannot improve so rapidly, whatever the government may be. The sugar, iron, cotton, and other factories started by King Mindo-Min did not pay, and no European could hope to make them pay. The labour difficulty is for the reasons just indicated, sufficient to render such enterprise unprofitable for a long time to come, until the population has time to grow.

The earth-oil monopoly yielded three lakhs to King Theebaw; with free trade the competition of the American oil will diminish the profits from that source. The coal mines can be worked, and will benefit trade, but they are not expected to yield any profit to Government or give an increment to the revenue. An official, who has examined the problem, states it as his opinion that if Upper Burma be taken by the British Administration it will probably pay its way well ten

years hence, provided that no quarrel with China arises in the meantime. But at first the province cannot, in the opinion of this enquirer, be made to pay its expenses.

The Chief Commissioner, Mr. Bernard, has given much time and care to the examination of the financial aspect of the annexation problem. He has found that the gross revenues of Upper Burma in the best year of King Theebaw's reign, when that sovereign had established monopolies and other sources of revenue, were in round numbers as follows :—Capitation tax, forty lakhs ; Royal lauds, ten lakhs ; rubies and jade, three lakhs ; forests, fifteen lakhs ; letpet or pickled tea monopoly, eight lakhs ; earth-oil monopoly, three lakhs ; customs dues, fifteen lakhs ; petty cesses and transit dues, nine lakhs ; water-rate for upkeep of irrigation channels, two lakhs ;—making a total of a hundred and five lakhs.

During the last two years of Theebaw's reign, when the country was misgoverned and harried by dacoits, and suffered from partial droughts, the receipts fell below this total. When the country is made a province, the British administration will be unable to obtain any revenue from customs which yielded fifteen lakhs ; cesses and transit dues, nine lakhs, and monopolies six lakhs. Some

thirty lakhs of revenue will have to be sacrificed on the altar of free trade. On the other hand, it is suggested that five lakhs might be obtained from a stamp duty, and also something from pickled tea. It is not likely that any liquor excise or opium will be introduced, as though both those indulgences are abhorrent to the Burmese, they have wrought great mischief to Lower Burma, and it is probable they may have to be abandoned there.

We may take it, then, that King Theebaw's maximum of a hundred and five lakhs of revenue will sink to eighty lakhs, when the resources of customs, monopolies, and transit dues were abandoned. Now let us see what the expenses will be, calculating them at their lowest. The cost of police, revenue collection, courts of justice, and general administration is estimated at forty lakhs. Public works, barracks, &c., twenty lakhs. The cost of garrison, as proposed by General Prendergast before his recent experience of the cost and trouble which the dacoits may occasion, will amount to thirty-nine lakhs, bringing the total to ninety-nine lakhs.

Mr. Bernard, I understand, considers that the garrison proposed by the General might be reduced, and that it should not cost more than

twenty-five lakhs eventually. But probably a large garrison will be required for a few years. In that case the deficit on the profits without any debit for the cost of the Expedition will be nineteen lakhs a year. The cost of the Expedition is estimated at thirty lakhs up to the end of January; but it will probably largely exceed this estimate, as reinforcements have become necessary. Even with Mr. Bernard's small garrison the British administration of Burma would show a deficit of four lakhs a year. I doubt whether the military authorities will consider so small a garrison adequate to protect so large a country, conterminous with China, and having on its frontier a variety of warlike tribes inhabiting well nigh inaccessible mountains.

The cost of administration, it is foreseen, will certainly grow; but then the revenue will perhaps grow too. Lower Burma, two years after annexation, cost about eighty lakhs and yielded forty-five or fifty lakhs. Now, after a lapse of thirty years Lower Burma yields two hundred and eighty lakhs, giving what is deemed in Rangoon a clear surplus of ninety lakhs. That is the amount of the surplus after paying all civil charges and cost of administration, but an Indian financier would regard it as a

contribution towards the general military expenditure incurred for the safety of Burma and the rest of the Indian Empire. On the other hand, it is urged that the surplus would be considerably less if Lower Burma were properly provided with judicial machinery, with roads and public works, and an efficient police. In considering whether the magnificent enhancement of the revenues of Lower Burma is a ground for calculating upon a similar enhancement, or anything like it, in Upper Burma, it would be as well to bear in mind the difference in the physical conditions of the two regions, and the economical conditions thence arising.

So much for the financial aspects of the policy of annexation, in so far as it implies the direct administration of the country as a British province.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE RESOURCES OF THE
COUNTRY.

**The Rainy Season—The Country Under-Populated—
Opinions on Annexation—The Mineral Wealth of the
Country—Teak Forests—The Trade in Theebaw's
Time—Trade Unaffected by the Massacres—Character
of the Country—Burmese Labour.**

THE question suggests itself whether the country can yield under a different regime a larger output of produce than it has hitherto yielded. Doubts arise as to the realisation of the expectations on this point so generally entertained in Rangoon. As we have said above, the rainfall of Upper Burma, which comes in May, June, and July, is small, scarcely reaching 30 inches; and the river is, except during the monsoon, too far below the general level to permit of any extended system of irrigation, though royal canals have been made in some districts. There are no Persian wheels anywhere—probably they

could not be used satisfactorily where the water is some thirty feet below the level of the fields. The water is besides separated during greater part of the year from the possible fields by sandbanks, varying from a quarter of a mile to two or three miles wide, when the river is at its lowest. The soil is very sandy, the river at every flood cutting its way into it, and sweeping it in vast quantities southwards. The course of navigation is made uncertain and dangerous by the ever-changing distribution of sandbanks thus created. The impression grows upon the observer, who sees hundreds and hundreds of miles of sparsely populated country going past the steamer day after day, that the fertility and resources of Upper Burma have been exaggerated, and this impression is confirmed by inquiries as to the state of cultivation a little inland. In all directions there is jungle, the haunt of wild animals. Flocks of wild geese rest tranquilly by the edge of the river, and wild duck might be shot in thousands. For hundreds of miles these birds seem to be the sole inhabitants.

The theory that since Lower Burma has thriven so well under civilised government, Upper Burma

would thrive equally well, and yield as large a revenue, takes no note of the difference of physical conditions. I find that some of my fellow-voyagers, who set out with strong convictions as to the profits of annexation, modified their views as they went northward. Doubts as to whether the country could pay for the costly machinery of improved administration began to be entertained, and the possibility of effecting a compromise by establishing a protectorate, which would cost Lower Burma and India nothing, was discussed with philosophic equanimity. The Chief Commissioner was strongly of opinion that the annexation of Upper Burma would be a mistake; the country, he thinks, could not for some years to come support the cost of a British administration, and he is of opinion that all that is required could be accomplished by a protectorate. Sir Charles Aitchison, who was formerly Chief Commissioner, holds the same view. On the other hand, Sir A. Phayre, General Fyche, and Sir A. Eden were in favour of annexation.

The supposed mineral wealth of the country is an undoubted temptation. Silver, gold, copper, coal, jade, and iron are marked in all directions on maps, which are probably based on explorations and ascertained facts. But the

treasure has never been actually brought to light. The Burmese Kings have not been indifferent to projects offering the chance of bringing in untold wealth; various schemes have been submitted to them and some have been tried; but all these potential mines have never yielded much. There is some ground, however, for counting on a paying output of coal, which would give a stimulus to steam navigation, and reduce the cost of working railways.

As we came up the river we stopped at a place which may as well be called, by the English translation of its name, Earth-oil Creek. There are some 350 wells, belonging mostly to private proprietors who have hitherto been obliged to sell the oil, at a price fixed by the Burmese Government, to certain monopolists. This arrangement kept up the price, which seems to have been the chief object. Upper Burma used its own oil, and the King drew a royalty of ten per cent., which yielded him Rs. 20,000 per mensem. But the demand has gradually fallen off from four lakhs of vis—the vis is nearly a gallon—to one lakh forty thousand. Mr. Phayre has directed the Woon on the spot to go on as before, fixing a rate which is not excessive, but it is said that the oil can be undersold

by far better oil from America. The endeavour to improve the revenue from earth-oil is not likely to be successful. The oil is said to be inexhaustible, but it comes in comparatively small quantities and not in the fountain-like jets which make the fortunes of those who strike oil in America and on the Caspian. ' ' '.

The question of preserving and enhancing the revenue from the royal teak forests is of importance. Hitherto there has been no real control over the operations of the native contractors on the spot, who cut down timber very wastefully. If the departmental system in force in British Burma be introduced in the north, there will be a great falling off in the output for some years to come. The forests must be preserved, and there will be almost a cessation of cutting over large areas until the trees are in a fit state to pass the inspector of the Forest Department. It is asserted that the tendency to drought, which has caused so much alarm for some years past, is due to the destruction of timber and the denudation of the hills. Provision will have to be made to replant, if we are to maintain the supply of timber in the future, and avert drought. The teak fortunately grows rapidly where the soil and climate are suitable. There are still

vast areas of valuable forest which have not been trenched upon at all. Probably the improved supervision of the forests hitherto exploited would not after all decrease the supply of teak, but would only render it obligatory to seek timber in new localities. Still it seems doubtful whether any considerable augmentation of revenue from the Burmese forests can be safely calculated upon.

The anticipations of an enormous and immediate increase of trade with Upper Burma as the result of the substitution of an administration superior to that of King Theebaw is really based on an exaggerated estimate of the active mischief done by the inertness and incapacity of that sovereign. But the late King did not, as a matter of fact, influence to any great extent the course of commerce during his reign. On this point the testimony of Mr. Bernard, addressed to the Government of India in reply to the representations of the Rangoon Chamber of Commerce on the subject, may be taken as conclusive :—

“The growth of our trade with Upper Burma,” wrote Mr. Bernard, “has no doubt been retarded, at times it has been even stopped, by the establishment of monopolies or by other restraints on trade. But when

such arrangements or exactions are contrary to treaty, diplomatic representation has usually resulted in their eventual removal. It is perhaps worthy of note that the volume of British trade across our frontier with Ava equals 62 per cent. of the total trade across the whole land frontier of India, from Kurrachee to Chittagong. According to Mr. Hamilton's report for 1881-82, the value of the total trade across the land frontier of India with Biluchistan, Afghanistan, Cashmere, Thibet, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhootan, Manipur, and the tribes of the Eastern frontier, is valued at about 5,145,000*l.* Our trade with Ava, it has been seen, has averaged 3,224,814*l.* a year during the reign of the King Theebaw. To the credit of the Ava Government, it may be mentioned that, though the treaty allows them to take a 10 per cent. *ad valorem* import duty on British goods, yet hitherto they have levied only a 5 per cent. import duty. Additional exactions and imports of different kinds are doubtless laid on trade in the interior of the country, and traffic along minor routes in Ava is shackled in many ways. But these obstacles to free commerce would be found in a comparatively uncivilised and comparatively misgoverned State under any circumstances. And the difference between the

10 per cent. duty allowed by treaty and the 5 per cent. duty now levied is, *pro tanto*, a distinct gain to our merchants. During the five years that have passed since the withdrawal of the Resident from Mandalay the traffic of the Irrawady Flotilla Company, probably the largest and wealthiest river navigation company in Asia, has grown and flourished. The increase and the permanence of British trade with Ava is largely due to the exertions and good management of this company. But the officials of the company would probably admit that they had, in the main, and with a few exceptional cases of rudeness at the hands of local officials, met with consideration, if not courtesy, at the hands of the Ava Government during the reign of King Theebaw."

There seems to be no good ground for expecting a sudden increase of the volume of the Upper Burman trade, for under the old system, however defective, it had increased sufficiently to keep pace with the needs and means of the population. It is not easy to arrive at any correct estimate of the trade of Upper Burma; the only guide is the government return of the trade between Upper and Lower Burma. The amount of the trade between the former country and the

countries beyond can only be guessed at, but it could not have been very considerable. It has been estimated at half a million sterling a year. The report on the inland trade of Lower Burmah for the year 1879-80 states that the only monopolies retained by Theebaw, the new King of Upper Burma, were those of petroleum and pickled tea. It is mentioned as a matter of surprise that the trade by the Irrawady had not been so seriously affected as might have been expected from the state of affairs in Mandalay during the year. The imports showed a decrease of only sixty-two thousand pounds from the figures of the previous year. There was an increase in the import of ponies which could be purchased at from ten to fifteen pounds in Rangoon, and there was an increase also in the number of the voyages of the Flotilla steamers in spite of the alarms which were constantly arising. This would appear to show that the permutations of the palace but slightly affected the daily routine of life in Burma. The wheat required for the British garrisons in Lower Burma came from the King's territories, and the up-country people came down the Irrawady in their usual numbers to earn a little money by helping to cut the harvest in the

Lower country. The Irrawady was then, as it will always be, the chief route of commerce, for all the roads except one closed for five months in the year. It is the more remarkable that the bulk of the export and import trade remained unaffected by the dreadful events which created so much consternation beyond the frontier, as the fall of the Yanoung Prince entailed heavy losses upon traders of Mandalay who were his creditors for a large amount. One man lost four lakhs. The Prince's assets, which were far too large to have been honestly come by in the course of a year or two, were confiscated to the crown, so that there was nothing left to the creditors. Before the death of Nioung he was given monopolies of betelnuts, imported silk and cheroots, for which he paid twelve thousand pounds, but they were abolished. Subsequently the King, who was in want of money, set up a number of other monopolies, but the urgency of the menacing representations of Lord Ripon's Government caused them to be immediately abandoned. It cannot be said then that the monopolies of King Theebaw's reign retarded the growth of trade, and we cannot look to their abolition to give a new stimulus to Burmese commerce, inasmuch as they had

disappeared owing to the pressure of the Government of India long before Theebaw was deposed.

A provision in the commercial treaty between India and Burma, which was intended to encourage the re-export to the Upper country of dutiable goods imported at Rangoon, had an unfortunate influence in curtailing the trade. Instead of paying five per cent. as on goods for consumption in Lower Burma, only one per cent. was charged for goods to be sent to independent Burma. But the four per cent. difference was not allowed unless the intention to re-export was declared on landing, and it was further stipulated that the bales should not be opened in Lower Burma. The result was that the small Burman traders, in whose hands the great bulk of the internal trade lay, were unable to pay in advance the duty on goods which must be exported to one market. The trade was, therefore confined to a few capitalists with whom the pedlars could not compete. If they sent the balance of their stock on which they had paid five per cent., they would have been undersold by the capitalist who had only paid one per cent. The big traders ruled the markets, and the effect is said to have been unfortunate.

The monopolists in Upper Burma were not so mischievous in their influence. They had nothing to do with the trade in goods in Upper Burma. Their right related to goods intended for export. Goods of the kind included in the monopoly had to pass directly or indirectly into the 'monopolists' hands before they could pass the frontier.

For some years past the purchasing power of the people was diminished by the partial failure of harvests through drought. The rainfall shows a decided tendency to diminish, and it is asserted that the destruction of the forests consequent on the great development of the teak trade has the principal share in the misfortune. The country is upland, rising gradually from Prome, which is well within the British frontier, to the mountains beyond Bhamo. The country from Lord Dalhousie's frontier line extends for five hundred and forty miles to the north. Its breadth is four hundred and twenty miles, giving an area of rather less than two hundred thousand square miles. The area of the provinces which have hitherto constituted British Burma amounts to eighty-eight thousand five hundred square miles. Lower Burma has a full, and indeed superabundant, rainfall. The Upper country has

a very small one, and the margin between the ordinary short supply and drought is very narrow.

It is to all appearance impossible that the larger country can ever compete with the smaller in the outturn of agricultural produce. The general character of the country apart from the question of rainfall checks the hope that the Upper country can ever be a great exporting country. At present there are signs of a failure to produce sufficient food to feed the sparse population. For years past there has been a growing demand on Lower Burma for food supplies, and last year rice to the value of six hundred thousand pounds was sent to feed the northern people. Good wheat grows on some of the plains, and if labour were not so scarce and dear, a good deal might be produced for exportation. But even in Lower Burma, where the labour market is supplied from India and from Upper Burma, coolies insist upon getting a rupee a day and more for harvesting, and in Rangoon it is not an unusual payment to make to labourers loading the ships.

It would be difficult by any payment to tempt natives of India or Lower Burmese to go into the Upper country for agricultural

work. The Burmese farmers object to work land in the occupation of Europeans. They insist on the usual Burmese arrangement that they should bring their own bullocks and seed and divide the harvest with the owner of the land. This kind of partnership is not liked by Europeans, and if extensive plantations are to be created and worked, cooly labour will have to be imported from India. Mr. O'Connor in one of his valuable reports on frontier trade states that the disturbed condition of the country between Bhamo and south-western China has had the effect of increasing the quantity of raw cotton from Upper Burma to Rangoon from fifteen thousand hundredweights to ninety-eight thousand. The savage tribes in those parts, he says, practise robbery and murder on an extensive scale. They make the routes into China unsafe, and the usual export of cotton from Upper Burma to that country ceased. Cotton was, therefore, sent down by the river to Rangoon, where it is shipped to China *via* the Straits. The obstacles arising from the disturbances on the Chino-Burmese frontier, still continue, and divert trade from that outlet.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE POLITICAL OUTLOOK IN
REGARD TO ANNEXATION.

Europeans and Natives of India Favour Annexation—The French Bishop's Opinion—Burmese Acquiescence in the Massacres—A Derelict Church—Theebaw's Scheme for a Great University—Lord Dufferin's View—The Shans and the Shan Country—The Siam and Shan Railway Scheme—The King of Siam's Policy—The French Designs—Conterminous Frontiers.

THE political factors of the question of annexation cannot be so succinctly set down as the financial. I have already stated that most Europeans and natives of India desire annexation pure and simple, and that an impression prevails amongst many of them that the Burmese in their hearts wish for annexation too. This opinion is, however, regarded by several officials who have paid considerable attention to the matter, as erroneous. The Burmese, as might be

expected of a people who have a superstitious veneration for their Royal House, desire a king, though they are willing to accept as a decree of destiny the future ascendancy of British authority. It was not easy under the political and military circumstances of the time, to get into friendly and intimate conversation with natives of the country, who might be considered representatives of the prevailing opinion in regard to recent and present events, and the prospects of the future. But through circumstances it happened that I was able to come into contact with intelligent natives who were not afraid to speak frankly, knowing that I was not an official and that no harm would come to them. I was also favoured by Mr. Bernard, Colonel Sladen, and others with much interesting information. I went to Burma without any preconceived ideas, and I therefore was perhaps the better qualified to note without bias the impressions made upon me by what I saw and heard. I shall in these pages try to be impartial, as on the spot I endeavoured to give an attentive hearing to all opinions. In Mandalay I had the advantage of listening to the energetic and indeed impassioned language in which Dr. Bourdon, the French Catholic Bishop, vindicated the

claim of the Burmese population to be saved from the Alompra dynasty, by annexation to British India. The Burmese, he declared, were utterly disgusted with the slavish system maintained by the dynasty; the kings did not look upon themselves as the highest magistrates and servants of the country, but as its absolute masters and owners; they conceived that they were under no obligation to their subjects, but held, fanatically, that their subjects belonged, body and soul, to them. The people are now, the reverend Bishop declared, quite tired of all this, and of all that resulted from it—oppressive extortion, insecurity of life and property, and general hardship. They saw that their countrymen in British Burma were well off, and they wish to be under the same Government. If your conscience, said the Bishop, does not allow you to keep the country now that you have got it, why did you come here and depose Theebaw?

Dr. Bourdon said that a protected prince would doubtless be selected from the Alompra family; that family, he maintained, was incurably tainted by despotism; under any sovereign of that house the same despotism, corruption, and incapacity would infallibly spring up again. Theebaw was as good as any of his rela-

tives ; if we were not prepared to get rid of the system, what was the use of our turning everything upside down in Burma, to get rid of one man ? We should, he felt certain, have to do it all over again in three years. In regard to this suggestion it seemed obvious to point out that the facility with which the deposition of the king was effected on this occasion, would render a corporal's guard unnecessary the next time a deposition might be deemed requisite. There need be no alarm on that score. As for the question whether the country could pay its way if annexed, the worthy Bishop answered confidently that he was sure it could. Its resources would develop under a good government. I was asked to place the views of this ardent annexationist before the public. I promised to do so, and I fulfil that promise.

I have tried to get at the Burman view of the massacres, which cast such a cloud over Theebaw's advent to power. The friends of the victims denounce the Kinwoon Meingyee or the Tyndah or the Queen Dowager for the crime, and the King for acquiescing in it ; but for the most part the people seem to think that it was justifiable on the ground of State necessity and traditional usage. One Burmese said—" What mut-

tering there was by the English at the killing of a few persons by the King to prevent civil war, and now they themselves come, and having overthrown the King, they kill people every day and say it is right!" The massacres did not affect the public mind in Burma as they did in India; they were regarded as the traditional precaution. An unexecuted prince is considered to be a *de facto* conspirator and rebel; that he should be put to death to prevent universal disturbance and dacoity seems to the ordinary Burman intelligence a proposition that needs no argument: it is self-evident.

Theebaw was not held by his subjects to be a bloody—and he certainly was not a bold and resolute—tyrant. They did not look on him as an oppressor; the massacres did not affect the common people, but were mainly confined to the royal family. A thousand dacoits were made prisoners a month before the final catastrophe; they were not executed or tortured; they were, each of them, marked with the dacoit tatoo mark, and sent to their homes with an intimation that if they were ever caught again that mark would be their death-warrant. And so it has proved in many cases, I am told, under our martial law. The ex-King drew far less money

from his subjects than his predecessor ; in other words, perhaps, he was more successfully robbed by his subordinates. There is at least one fact which is to the credit of his administration. The late King Mindo-Min built for the English congregation a large and handsome church, a timber structure, but solid and costly with parsonage and schools. When the Resident was withdrawn, the Rev. Mr. Colbeck, who was then Chaplain, had of course to come away also, and he left the church and buildings as they stood, scarcely expecting to see them again. When Mandalay was occupied, the Bishop of Rangoon sent Mr. Colbeck to see what had happened. Empty, of course, and with the moveable seats gone, the church was standing intact, undefiled, practically uninjured. During the seven years in which it was derelict no attempt had been made to desecrate it. The stained glass windows were some of them gone and others, broken, possibly by the branches of contiguous trees ; the marble font, presented by Her Majesty, was intact, though the half-dozen little pillars supporting it had proved too tempting to some one. A church abandoned to itself for seven years in civilized and Christian London would certainly not be found ready for divine

service at the end of the time. So let us be just to the Burmans, who, if strange people in some respects, are very tolerant, and in the ordinary relations of life kindly and charitable. They do no wanton injury to life or property—provided the times are not out of joint, and dacoity does not present itself to them as a sacred duty which they owe to themselves and their country.

Mr. Colbeck has, by the permission of the Chief Commissioner and Colonel Sladen, taken over charge of the church and the school buildings. It is curious to know in this regard that King Theebaw conceived the project of founding a great University at Mandalay, at which English, French, German and Italian should be taught side by side with Burmese, Pali, and other languages. He contemplated making the forsaken English church, and the school buildings attached to it, the nucleus of the University, and asked Dr. Bourdon to be director and organiser. The Bishop consented, and several times saw the King, who, for a time, was very much interested in the matter, and said that he would provide the necessary funds ; but when asked what sum he would give, the answer was the unexpected one that he could give a hundred

rupees a month ! Dr. Bourdon thereupon said, " I will not take a pittance of that kind ; got the pupils, and I will teach them for nothing ; but I do not want a hundred a month." Theebaw let his grand project fall through. His name will not go down to posterity as the founder of the University of Mandalay.

The foreign complications, actual and threatened, which were the result of the late King's insane policy, were the real causes of the swift destruction of the Burmese monarchy. The necessity for putting an end to the entanglements which King Theebaw was preparing for Burma is universally acknowledged in India and in British Burma. That object having been attained by the deposition of Theebaw and the incorporation of his dominions in the Empire, the momentous problem that arose was thus stated in the words of the Viceroy in a speech at Lucknow on the 6th of December last. " As to future arrangements to be introduced in Upper Burma, they are now being considered carefully and deliberately ; and after a full examination of the various elements of a most momentous question, it is undoubtedly necessary, in order to preserve the security of

Lower Burma, as well as our Eastern India frontier, that our political ascendancy should prevail throughout the Upper Valley of the Irrawady. Whether this may be best secured by the union of both sections of the Burmese Empire under British rule, or by reconstitution, under certain conditions, of the kingdom of Upper Burma, is a very grave and serious matter, not to be settled hastily, or without anxious examination as to what will be conducive to the interests of India, to the welfare of the Burmese people themselves, and to the requirements of the Empire at large." These three factors, the interest of India, the welfare of the Burmese people themselves, and the requirements of the Empire at large, of course must be studied before arriving at a conclusion, and I have, therefore, given their due weight to some of the considerations which come under review. What we have just seen of the calculations and hopes of the French suggest excellent reasons for dealing with the question of the future of Upper Burma with a certain deliberation and firmness.

The Viceroy spoke at Lucknow with frankness upon the difficulties which lie in the way—difficulties, however, rather of knowledge and decision

than of action. They arise out of the nature of the country with which we have to deal, the character of its inhabitants, and their relations with the great Chinese Power, and the position of another European Government in the Indo-Chinese Peninsula. It is necessary to bear steadily in mind that the population, with which we are now about to deal, is ethnologically different from any with which we are acquainted in India. The Burmese and the Shans are substantially Indo-Chinese, the Chinese element having a constant tendency to press out the non-Chinese. There has been for ages a constant pressure from the north-east, which has forced the aboriginal population towards the south-west. M. Ferrier de Lacouperie, in his introduction to Mr. Colquhoun's interesting book on the Shans, speaks of the remnants of the non-absorbed and the non-sinicised parts of larger stocks of several races gradually driven south-westwards, as now scattered into an undefined number of fragments. These were apparently the original inhabitants of China Proper, and have been forced in this direction by the Chinese, who have now possession of that country, and are continuing to press on their

footsteps. The direction of race pressure is from China south-westward upon Independent Burma and British Burma.

It is part of the comprehensive programme put forward with so much ability by Mr. Colquhoun, and sustained by the labours of Mr. Holt Hallett, to open up the Shan country by a railway which will tap Yunnan in the interest of trade. The project contemplates the extension of British influence in substantial form over the vast country between the boundary of British Burma and the Chinese frontier on the north-east, and the French frontier in Tongking on the east and northward to Cochin China—the Shan country and Siam. It is a serious problem whether such a movement, conceived in the interest of rail-borne commerce, might not have the effect of accelerating the overflow of the Chinese across the Shan territory and into Burma. This overflow of the Chinese weighed seriously with Lord Dalhousie when he determined to draw the line of frontier of British Burma, where it has remained until now. The ethnic affinity of the inhabitants of the region in question with the Chinese would certainly

facilitate the immixture of further Chinese blood. The difficulty of controlling and administering a population with the characteristics of the Chinese, was dwelt upon forcibly by the great Viceroy, who never in any other matter hesitated to carry out unfalteringly the annexation policy with which his name is identified.

It is worthy of notice that amongst those who have most urgently advocated the annexation of Upper Burma, are the enterprising explorers who are endeavouring to promote an undertaking that will cover a much wider field, and make the line of intercommunication with China by the Bhamo route quite obsolete and useless. We are to be not only the guardians of civilisation in what until the other day was Theebaw's land, but we are to carry railways far beyond our borders and his, and to acquire in the country opened up by the railway, an ascendancy which we should find it difficult to distinguish from the political predominance to which M. de Freycinet admits we have an incontestable right in Upper Burma. Mr. Holt Hallett stuck to this text when he recently laid before the Royal Geographical Society a most interesting account of the Siamese Shan States, and gave a forecast of the further of the

great line of railway which is to bring the Chinese frontier on one side, and the Siamese capital on the other, into direct and easy communication with the British port of Moulmein. Nothing could have been more interesting as a means of laying before the geographers and the public the characteristics of a country of which, until Mr. Hallett and Mr. Colquhoun had revealed it, the world knew very little indeed. But the reflection does arise, on reading the proof on proof of the remunerativeness of the undertaking which its promoters have been able to accumulate, that this appeal should be made in vain to capitalists, whose faith in it is not sufficient to make them forego the guarantee which the Government of India have been so urgently asked to give. It is not likely that, with the large questions which claim an answer from the Government of India in Burma, any decision favourable to this project will be given, for some time to come at all events. Mr. Holt Hallett himself has shown that France is not likely to compete with us in railway enterprise in the Peninsula, and we may be sure that such political competition as we may have to reckon with from that Power will have its due place amongst

those "elements of a most momentous question" which Lord Dufferin's Government have under their consideration.

Whether the railway from Bangkok through the Shan. country to China be feasible or not, a railway between Burma *via* Yunnan is a geographical and engineering impossibility. Such a line would have to surmount a series of passes, eight thousand feet high, or tunnel through mountains like the St. Gothard and Mont Cenis. A certain amount of trade is carried on with Yunnan on the backs of men, and of mules, and it may be augmented. But no large trade by that route is practicable. It is impossible to tap what is known as the great Chinese trade, by way of Yunnan, for that province is in itself a mountain barrier to the richer provinces beyond, which are tapped by the Yangtse Kiang. Even the trade of Yunnan itself cannot be tapped to any great purpose on the Burman side. The Soukoy River is navigable to a point within the Yunnan frontier, and must take the bulk of the trade when peace is established in Tongking. The Chinese will probably throw obstacles in the way of the French on the Soukoy, and the

struction of the branch line. The King of Siam is counted upon for a guarantee of seven and a half per cent. on the line from Bangkok to China.

The King of Siam, we know on the best authority, could not find the money for the interest on such an undertaking. Apart from this, the King, much as he might favour a railway to open up the resources of his country, if it could be constructed without ruining his finances, fully recognises the possibility of political complications arising from the presence in the country of a foreign agency, either English or French, engaged in the construction and management of a great railway, through the heart of the country, and disposing of millions of money belonging to foreign capitalists. It is not probable that this great railway scheme will not receive the amount of support on the part of the Government of Siam, which is calculated upon. But the scheme is in the air, and it directs the attention of projectors and politicians alike to the problem, how to open up Siam to commerce and to political adventure.

It is satisfactory to have the assurance of the pioneers of the Indo-Chinese railway project that France will not invest her money in an undertaking

of that kind. It does not seem to the French so promising a line as that which they offered to build for Theebaw from Mandalay to the British frontier. Nevertheless what has been effected by the Government of India in Burma will probably create a desire on the part of the French to console themselves for the collapse of their endeavours to obtain a footing at Mandalay, by renewed activity at Bangkok. It will have to be considered whether rivalry on the eastern side of the Indo-Chinese Peninsula will conduce to the interests of either France or England. With Burma converted into a province, the French may endeavour to do the same with regard to either Siam or Bassac or Luang Prabang. We shall then not be far from the establishment of conterminous frontiers between British and French dominions in the farther East. Conterminous frontiers with Russia have been hitherto looked forward to as an evil and a danger. That Burma with its absence of resisting power, could be converted, like Afghanistan, into a buffer state, is impossible, but it is a question whether the reconstitution of a kingdom of Upper Burma, under conditions prescribed and fixed by the Government of India, might not have averted or postponed the establishment of an unwelcome a conti-

guity to the territories of another Power, which must always be attended with a certain inconvenience. For instance, if the British frontier be actually conterminous with that of the French, it will be out of the question to garrison Upper Burma with the three thousand six hundred men stipulated for in General Prendergast's scheme. Will ten thousand men be then sufficient? A passing addition to the French garrison on the other side, might oblige us, at a time of pressure on the Afghan frontier, to lock up twenty thousand men in Burma. That the French were ill-advised in their attempt to come into close contact with us in the valley of the Irrawady, has been demonstrated by the results. Whether we are better advised in pushing our military posts eastward towards the French possessions, is a matter claiming serious consideration. And there is no doubt that Lord Dufferin, who examines political problems on all sides, has given this question full consideration.

CHAPTER XX.

THE FUTURE OF BURMA.

The Proclamation of Annexation—The Diplomatic Reasons for the Step—The Question of Reconstituting the Kingdom Reserved for Consideration—Arrival of Lord Dufferin at Mandalay—Announcement that Burma is to be Administered by British Officials—Thanks to the Army, to Mr. Bernard, and Colonel Sladen—Finis Coronat Opus.

ON the 1st of January, 1886, the following proclamation announced, in a single sentence, the annexation of Upper Burma to the Queen's dominions :—

“By command of the Queen-Empress it is hereby notified that the territories formerly governed by King Theebaw will no longer be under his rule, but have become part of Her Majesty's dominions, and will, during Her Majesty's pleasure, be administered by such officers as the Viceroy and Governor-General of India may from time to time appoint.

(Sd.) DUFFERIN.”

It was explained in a speech of the Viceroy that this proclamation of annexation was issued for “diplomatic reasons.” In other words the

object of the announcement was to put an end to the diplomatic obligations which the ex-King had contracted. It was not, however, the intention of the Ministry at home to preclude by the proclamation the reconstitution of a Burmese kingdom, if that course should be deemed advisable upon due consideration. The question of the future form of the administration to be organised in Upper Burma was deferred, until the Viceroy had himself studied upon the spot the various aspects of the question.

It was understood in Burma, from the guarded words of the proclamation, that no decision as to the precise form that the new constitution would take, had been arrived at by the Government. In the Burmese translation of the proclamation, which was at first issued, the translators took it upon themselves to omit the words "during Her Majesty's pleasure," with the object of impressing on the Burmese the finality of the announcement. But this defective version of the important document was withdrawn by order of Government, and a new one was issued.

The question remained in suspense until the middle of February. On the twelfth of that month the Viceroy arrived at Mandalay, and assumed the designation of Governor of Upper Burma.

On the evening of Wednesday the 17th at a banquet in the Palace Lord Dufferin made the expected announcement as to the future of Burma in a speech proposing the health of the officers and the soldiers of the army that had taken part in the Burman campaign. Lord Dufferin paid a graceful and deserved tribute to the skill and success, as well as to the humane forbearance, which marked the progress of the conquest of Upper Burma under General Prendergast. Lord Dufferin well said that there is more true honour in having secured success with a minimum of bloodshed, than could have been gained by a costly victory, however glorious, on a fiercely contested field of battle. There is no reason to make any deduction from this praise on account of the regrettable incidents which occurred subsequently in the repression of insurrectionary movements, for General Prendergast was absent in Bhamo when those measures were unfortunately resorted to, and his first act upon his return was the issue of a general order prohibiting unauthorised executions. Mr. Bernard and Colonel Sladen also received the warm acknowledgments of the Viceroy. Mr. Bernard's administrative energy, and his rare disinterestedness, deserved this recognition, and so did Colonel

Sladen's patient and persevering diplomacy in dealing with the Burmese notables, before and after the fall of Theebaw. It was further announced that while the direction and control would remain in British hands, native agency would be employed as much as possible in the work of the administration.

Lord Dufferin was, perhaps, somewhat sanguine when he rejoiced that he could discern no sign of anything approaching to a partisan warfare against ourselves in Burma. In the beginning of the so-called dacoit movement there was no evidence that it was directed against us, but certainly it changed its character as it developed. This, however, is not a matter for much surprise. An irregular resistance was anticipated, the example of what had happened in Lower Burma not having been forgotten.

The most important announcement which the Viceroy made during his sojourn in Burma was that, to put an end to dacoity at any risk and cost, and to give full effect to the proclamation annexing Upper Burma to the British Empire, "the country will be at once placed under the supreme and direct administrative control of British officers." His Excellency eloquently predicted the future comfort and commercial prosperity which will be

ensured to the inhabitants under the new rule and said that, though some months, and perhaps years, might elapse, before his hopes were realised, yet it might be expected that in a decade the inhabitants of Upper Burma will be amongst the most prosperous and contented of Her Majesty's subjects.

That the lot of the Upper Burmans will be sensibly ameliorated by the change in their destinies, can scarcely be doubted. What more directly concerns older subjects of Her Majesty, is whether their interests will be equally benefited. We have accepted grave responsibilities, from which Lord Dalhousie and men of his undoubting temper deliberately held back. We have pushed our frontiers to the gorge of Chinese defiles, and have encamped our soldiers under the shadow of hills, on the further side of which France is endeavouring to maintain her ill-starred conquests. We have accepted, without hesitation, a financial deficit of nineteen lakhs a year, in the hope that in ten or fifteen years—if we have no Chinese war upon our hands in the meantime—Burman finance may establish an equilibrium, and perhaps yield a profit. We have added to our territories an immense region, which will have to be held by

a portion of an army which we are daily told is too weak to cope with dangers at the other end of the Empire. We do all this, and perhaps we are right in doing it. But we must do it knowingly, and with our eyes open, counting upon our imperial fortune, and ready to make it good, whatever betide. It is difficult to suppress a feeling of exultation when we hear that a new and magnificent province has been added to an almost boundless Empire, but the intoxication of glory and success, has its dangers as well as its seductions. Those who are masters of themselves in such a time are not the most easily cast down or disconcerted by the frowns of fortune; for them the goddess may turn her wheel, as the ploughman turns his clods,—

Pero giri Fortuna la sua ruota,
Come le piace, e'l villan la sua mærra.

Meanwhile, for weal or woe, Upper Burma is open to the enterprise and the capital of India and of England. It will be the fault of our citizens and our administrators if they do not avail themselves of the opportunity to benefit Burma and the Empire alike, and unite them in the bonds of a growing civilization.

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